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History of Indian Music

आम्नाय-ग्रन्थालय,

भारतनिधि, करौली

वाराणसी-५

ग्रन्थालय

दी, वाराणसी-५

अ ४१/३

Sri Swami Chidananda
for
The Yoga-Vedanta Forest University
[Ananda Nada Mandir]

आम्नाय-सम्यालय,
नरतर्निष, कपौरी
कापौरी-5

First Edition—1953
(1000 copies)

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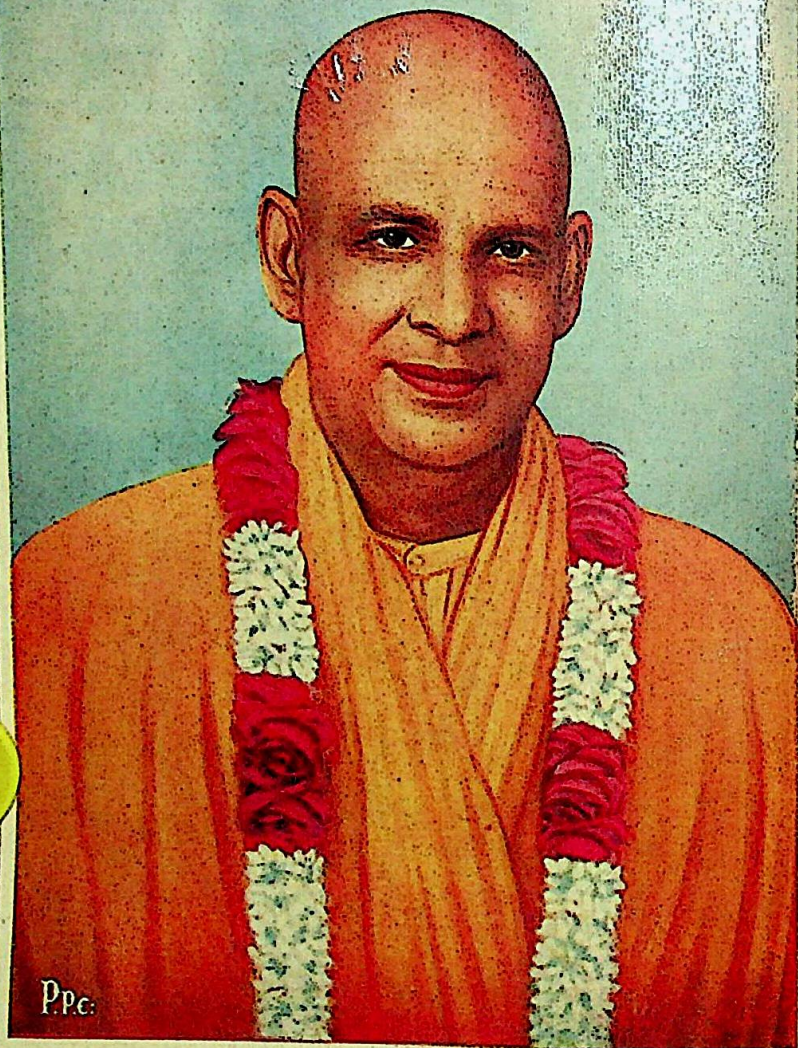
Printed at
Yoga-Vedanta Forest University Press,
(Ayas)

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आम्नाय-ग्रन्थाख्य,

नरतनिधि, करौली

वाराणसी-६



Swami Sivananda messenger of Love & Peace

FOREWORD

The History of Indian Music is but a glimpse into the history of India's spiritual culture. All that is Indian is spiritual; and from the earliest Vedic period the Indian genius has utilised the soul-force of music to effect a marvellous inner revolution in the heart of man. Thus, starting from the Sama-Gana of the Vedic period we have a continuous stream of Yogis and sages who have sung the glories of the Lord, sung their prayers to the gods, and sung their soul-elevating instructions and admonitions to man.

To the spiritual seeker music is an aid to Sadhana; music is Nada-Yoga which enables the aspirant to ascend the ladder of Self-realisation without any difficulty whatsoever. To the Siddha, music is a vehicle of expression of his ecstatic communion with God, and the best net in which to catch the wayward souls of worldly people, so that they could be halted in their flight to doom and could be provided with new wings of Viveka and Vairagya, with which to fly to God, the Fountain-source of supreme Bliss and Peace.

A study of the lives of the Nada-Yogis of India is, therefore, a highly absorbing study of the spiritual culture of the nation. I am glad that the pious and noble Sri Swami Ramasarananandaji has compiled in this handy volume the lives of some of the foremost Nada-Yogis of India. And, I hope that the student of Music who studies this precious volume will be inspired to follow the footsteps of these great saints and make his own life sublime. May God bless Sri Swami Ramasaranananda and all musicians of the world!

Swami Sivananda

EXORDIUM

The art of music has now adequately impressed the public with its benevolent influence on the mind and body so that an urgent demand has been created for books on the subject. This book fulfils the object admirably as regards the subjects of 'Memoirs and Biographies of Eminent musicians' It is the result of a deep and critical study of the available ancient and modern literature on famous musicians and musicologists, on the part of the author, who is himself well equipped with the knowledge of Theory and Practice of Hindustani music and has had nearly twenty years experience as a platform singer. It is a compilation of many historical sketches of our past musicians, dealing with the many vicissitudes and ordeals of artists to achieve success in their profession.

Written as it is in an easy style of expression, it has become a very handy and useful book of general knowledge to musicians and musical connoisseurs.

I am greatly indebted to a large number of books and articles as well as a number of leading periodicals and magazines, and Sangit Vidwans whom I personally contacted and recorded their biographies. Especially, I must record my sincere obligation to the following gentlemen who readily supplied me with the valuable information in the preparation of

this book. Late Muttayya Bhagavata, Asthan vidwan of Travancore, T. Lakshman Pilla, M. S. Ramaswami Iyer, Pro. P. Samba murty, Dr. V. Raghavan, E. Krishna Iyer, Late C. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, R. Ranga Ramaspuja Iyengar, Parur Sundaram Iyer Mudikonda Venkatraman—H. Nagabhushanan, D. Venkataswami Naidu; Editors of Hindu, Triveni, and Swatantra. The willing co-operation of all the gentlemen has considerably heightened the value of this book.

Above all, I offer my sincere salutations to Gurudev, Sri Swami Sivananda Maharaj of Rishikesh—a great Patron of Letters and Arts and the Founder of 'Ananda Nada Mandir' for having readily accepted my dedication of this book at His Lotus feet, and but for whose benevolence and generosity, this book would not have seen the light of day.

Om Tat Sat.

Rishikesh.
12-12-1955

Sivananda Padarenu Ramasarananda.
(alias M. R. Sastri)

ज्ञानाय-मन्त्राय-
परमार्थ-सिद्धि-
वाराणसी-५

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE

We feel happily privileged to place before the public this inaugural volume of Swami Ramsarananda's (M R Sastri of Kovvur. Andhra State) unique development on the science of Indian Music under the title "HISTORY OF INDIAN MUSIC". This unusual and invaluable work will be comprised of several parts of which this present volume dealing with the musical culture of "*Tamil Nad*" in Dakshina Bharata. The second part to be published next will take up the subject of the Musicians of the Royal Courts of Travancore and Mysore as also of the famous Instrumental Players of South India. These volumes will form a most valuable, inspiring, instructive and very informative record of the gradual growth and development of the Musical Culture of India from the earliest Vedic times upto the modern times including the present 20th century.

The revered author, who is himself a musician of repute and a student of Indian Music besides being a research worker in subject has chosen a unique mode for the presentation of his subject. The development of any art, Craft or Science is verily resultant of the vital impulse imparted to them by successive living masters in each several generation. The accumulated product of their researches and their unique-re-vitalising contribution to the further-

ance of that Science tends to bring about incessant progression and added perfections to it. Each master, according to his peculiar genius, adds to it his distinctive touch and thus during his life time enriches it thereby. Thus you have in the connected biographies and the inspiring narratives of their exalted lives an intimate and a living-history of the particular Art or Science. It is this significant fact that has made the talented author to choose this happy mode of presentation of his subject in this biographical serial form.

The gifted author of this work is a music-lover, who has been a keen student and a devout votary of music for the past more than quarter of a century. Being endowed with an innate genius for melody, he very early in his career made a very favourable impression upon the music-world and earned the distinction of "Sangeeta Sudhakar" at the Music Conference, Ajmer, in 1936 and also gained distinction for the research in H. H. Swati Tirunal's compositions and rendered them in the presence of the present Rajpramukh. He gained the attention of the Music-loving public. As a scholar engaged in research work in music, the Rev. author has gained the good opinion of eminent people like Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, Sir Dr. Radhakrishnan, Sir Raja Vikrama Verma, Harindranath Chatopadhyaya and exponents of Indian music like Sri G. H. Ranada (Committee of the National Academy of Drama, Dance and Music, Delhi), Sri R. Srinivasan M. A. (Retired Professor Travancore University), Sri

1. **Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, Sri Sangeet Samrat "Sangeet Marthand" Sangeet Mahamahodaya Pandit Omkarnath Thakur** (Principal, College of Music, Benaras Hindu University). Touring all over the country since 1936, the author has been giving musical recitals in different parts of India, and also important Musical Conferences at the Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Delhi, Ajmer, and Allahabad from time to time. Thus his touch with the Science of music is both deeply theoretical as well as intensely and actively practical. This fact, therefore, adds immensely to the value of this work and makes it inspiring, authentic and very greatly informative.

Such a comprehensive and detailed work of a biographical nature has not appeared hitherto. This work is a great contribution in the field of research into the absorbing subject of music, musicians and the integral musical culture of Bharatavarsha. There is no doubt that the Bibliography upon this important subject will be the richer due to the publication of this work. It will be invaluable alike to the historian, the music-lover as well as the student of Indology. This work, we feel, surely forms a distinctive contribution towards the great, momentous, all-round national cultural revival that is taking place at the present moment in regenerated Free India. It is in this spirit of Jatiya Seva and as our offering towards the welcome task of cultural revival and regeneration that, with humility and joy, we place this book before the public.

—Swami Chidananda,
General Secretary, D.L.S.

ANANDA NADA MANDIR

On the 6th December, 1955, H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj inaugurated at the Sivanandanagar, under the auspices of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University, the ANANDA NADA MANDIR, in the presence of a distinguished gathering, particularly of H. H. Sri Parvati Karji Maharaj (a renowned musical exponent), H. H. Sri Swami Narayanji Maharaj of Kholi Ashram, etc.

The aims and objects of the Ananda Nada Mandir were agreed to at the meeting as under :

1) Attainment of God-realisation through the path of devotional music.

2) Revival of the ancient system of Nada Upasana.

3) Purification of the present day music which is tending to become Rajasic and Tamasic and therefore gross and sensual.

4) To establish centres all over the world to work out the above aims.

5) To start a periodical magazine for the revival and the effective propagation of Nada.Sadhana and to spread this particular aspect of the Bhakti Marga.

6) To do all that may be necessary to work out the above aims and objects.

The instruction and the training given in the "Ananda Nada Mandir" will be Karnatic, and North Indian, styles of music and will include instructions in all varieties of musical instruments as also vocal music.

The instructions and training in the Ananda Nada Mandir will be entirely free to all students, provided that such of those that are in a position and can afford to help the institution may contribute anything voluntarily.

The students who seek admission into the Ananda Nada Mandir will, of course, travel on their own expenses and defray their boarding charges only. Even this last charge, viz : boardingcharge, will be waived in case of all deserving, earnest seekers who cannot afford to pay anything.

The Ananda Nada Mandir will work from September to June every year

(All correspondence and enquiries in this connection may be addressed to Nadabrahmanandaji, Principal; Sivananda Music College, Sivananda Nagar P.O., Rishikesh.)

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History of Indian Music

CHAPTER I

Musical Culture of Tamil Nad

There were two principal streams of the art of Indian music, which had their origins independently, but which eventually blended into one called the "Karnatic" system. They are the Dravidian (तिरविड्य), and the Aryan (आर्यन्) systems of music. The word Karnatic is a simplified form of the compound "Tamil" word meaning the land bounded on three sides by the Sea. If this music were purely Aryan, it would have been known by some Hindustani name.

To prove the antiquity of the Dravidian system, Dr. Heras, the noted Researcher says, that 'there existed a Dravidian musical instrument known as "yazh" known to old dwellers of Tamil Nad. Thence it is clear that there might have been a musical system in rudimentary form. He also traces Tamil words in its heiroglyphics. All this was four thousand years before the Christian Era—i.e. long before the advent of the Aryans in India. But that system was not altogether rudimentary as one might suppose, since later on musical treatises such as, Isainumukkam, Sittisai, Perisai, Muthunarai, Muthukurukku, were written about and after the time of the second Tamil Sangam. The available ancient texts which throw light upon the ancient system of a high calibre are the Epics 'Silappadikaram' of Ilankovadikal (200 A.D.) Agananooru Puruhanooru. In it we have incontrovertible evidence to show that the Dravidian system was a highly developed one to which modern Karnatic system owes a great deal of its character and make up and that the two cultures, the Aryan and the Dravidian were blended. The arts of music and dancing are well-described in Silappadikaram. It discusses the various gramas, the

different Gaha manipulation and the method of composing rare ragas to the tune of nearly 12 thousands in number. These ragas are called 'Pans' of which only 100 were in use then. It is anomalous to say how these ragas became extinct and how the current ragas with their distinct Aryan nomenclature have come to sway the field of music.

COMMON RAGA SYSTEM:-- From remote ages, the North and South were in intimate cultural contact. The 22 srutis of fundamental importance to both the systems were conceived even before 2nd century A.D. The most popular Karnatic Ragas viz. Sankarabharnam, Karahari Priya, Todi and Kalayni are survivals of the art of the Golden age of Tamil civilisation.

In both the Aryan and Dravidian works on music, the primary six ragas formed by the manipulation of the one suddha Mela Raga are well described. The description is same but with different names for, e.g. Dhira Sankarabharanam, (Sempalaipan). 2. Mecha-kalyan (Arunbalaipan), Karaharapriya (Pudumalai-pan), Hanumatodi (sewazhi palaipan), Hari Kambodi (kodipalaipan), Nata Bhiravi (vilaripalaipan) respectively in the Tamil works.

Besides the musical theory as embodied in Tamil works has been no less active and powerful than that of the sanscrit treatises in moulding Karnatic music unto its present shape. The (पञ्चश्रुति, चतुश्रुति, रिषभ, धैवत) which are not given by Saraṅga were native to the south and were probably the intervals used in Tamil system of a by-gone epoch.

When once they are admitted, Melakartha scheme of 72 scales built of the different combinations of notes follows as a natural sequence. As in the respect of Alapa also is seen the present practice based with remarkable faithfulness on the music of the ancient Tamils. The Tamil division of the octaves into 12 Rasis is quite original and epoch-making. The purest swara system of Karnatic music, is based on this division and the Melakartha system has been formulated roughly on the basis of this division.

Tamil system has had very important contributions to make to the present system.

MUSICAL COMPOSERS: Karnatic musical tradition is the common heritage of the whole of the South, comprising the Andhras, the Tamils, the Kanarese and the Keralas. The raga schemes, the moorchanas, the gamakas and Swaraprastharas peculiar to the Karnatic school, are in the nature of a common ancestral musical heritage. Even the compositions of great composers like Tyagaraj, Samasastri, Muthuswami, Swati Tirunal, Purandardass are nevertheless a part of the common heritage although in different languages. The composers were great Vaggeyakaras in whose works there is a happy blend of Matu and Dhatsu i. e. literary and musical aspects. Hence they live for all times and are the pride of the south Indians.

The Tamilians have a flair and love for music and dance. Our ancient and hoary culture, civilisation and religious practices have been nurtured only by folk-songs and devotional-songs which formed the basis of life in villages. Tamil civilisation could boast of a literature, rich in musical traditions. Epics like Kambar's Ramayan show that in ancient Tamilnad, music concerts were in popular fervour. In the direction of musical compositions, there are 4 varieties viz. the art music, the sacred music, the dance and the folk-music. There are operas in Sanskrit, Telugu and Tamil which were staged in front of temples. The ballads of the south have preserved for us much interesting material. In the sphere of art music, there are planned exercises to develop the vocal and instrumental technique,—the plectral bowing, blowing and striking methods. In sacred music, the Nagaswara and Bhajan parties attached to the temples and recitals of Odavars and the dances of Araiylars have all contributed to the spread of music knowledge among the rustics. Although the old Dravidian system had its own nomenclature, melody types and rhythm, there are few now who can sing

them in original form. The more serious type of Dravidian songs in Tamil pass under the names of Tevaram, Tiruvayimozhi, and Tirupugazh. Tevaram and Tiruvachakam were the earliest Dravidian compositions. Tirupugazh is a very popular variety in the south and has a large number of melody modes. Some of the melodies in the Tirupugazh system are called Venba. Akaval, Kalippa, Kalithogai, Thazisai, Mangalam, Thodayam and Pillaikavi which are sung in the current style. In adopting Karnatic ragas to these Tamil compositions, a certain amount of liberty is taken by musicians and new notes and graces not sanctioned by musical science are introduced. This has only enriched Tamil music. The lighter variety of Dravidian songs is found in the Kavadihindus. Themmanagu and Kummi which attain the same degree of excellence and status as any other composition.

It is an indisputable fact that the glory of taking the lead in lyrical compositions belongs to the Andhras. The name of the Immortal Tyagaraj, is pre-eminent in this sphere and Samasastri and Muthuswamy followed him.

Tamil compositions even long after this had taken the recitative form. The Tevaram, Tiruvachakam, Tiruvarupta, Tayamanuwar and other works are standing monuments of the intrinsic sweetness and musical adaptability of the Tamil Bhasha. All the four races, the Telugus, the Tamils, the Canarese and the Malayalis inherit common characteristics and traditions and bear the closest kinship to one another. South India has produced some of the world's prolific composers such as Purandardas, Kshetrajna, Tyagaraja, Samasastri, Muthuswami and Swati Tirunal and Narayanatirtha who bequeathed to us songs which constitute a precious legacy. The 72 Mala Ragamala of Maha Vaidyanathan, and the 108 Raga-tala Malika of Ramaswamy Dixitar are two of the world's longest musical compositions. The Tarangini of Narayan Tirtha of the 17th cent. is the longest sanskrit Opera. The tala system is equally all-embracing in its

character. The 35 Suladi talas branching off into 175 varieties by the Gati-Bhedas, the 108 talas and compound rhythms figuring in some of the Tirupugazh Hymns of Arunagiri Nathar are all worthy of note.

In the field of musical Iconography, south India is surprisingly rich. The frescoes and sculptures of the different periods adorning the temples, throw a flood of light on topics like the shape and structure of musical instruments and the poses of the members of the concert parties. The musical stonepillars found in the temples of Hampi, Madura, Alagir Koil, Tinneveli, Chidambaram and Suchindram are marvels of architectural and technical skill. They were used to provide both a rhythmic and a musical accompaniment. The timbre of the notes emanating from the pillars correspond to the notes of the Jalateranga as old as two thousand years. In Chidambaram temple, we find the classical dance poses with relevant slokas engraved beneath them. The only two musical inscriptions of India are to be found in the Sikkhinath deval at Kudimiyamala and Tirumayam in the Pudukota state. Of all the old instruments Yazh resembling the modern Sarasvati Veena, occupied a foremost place in the domain of Karnatic music. Next comes the Violin or Ravanhatta, a popular also and accompanying instrument, introduced 100 years ago in Travancore State. Other instruments introduced are the Drone (Tambura), Swarabat, Balasarasvati, Sarinda, flute, Gottu (Vichitra Veena) Ghatam, Dholak, Mridang, Kanjira, Morchang, (jews Harp) cymbals, Jhalar, Mogudi, Mukhaveena, Bag-pipe, Bugle, concertina, Xylophone, Triangle, Taval (Dhol). Of these the Flute, Violin, Veena, Nagaswaram hold the field in musical concerts.

The popular musical compositions are Kritis, Varnas, Pallavis, Padas, Javalis, Tillanas, and Bhajans. In the direction of dance forms many sabdas, Koustubhas, and Pada Varnas were composed by experts. The art of Kalakshepa reached a high water mark. Nirupanas were composed in attractive tunes in

Tamil and Telugu. National songs gained popularity. Instrumental music developed tremendously. Karnatic musical orchestra has been introduced. Instrumental forms like overtures, marches and variations on them also were composed. New instruments like Balakokil (subra-Veena) Jalactronium, Grahabheda Pradarsini, Krishna Rajendra Veena were invented.

MUSIC LITERATURE: The publications of rare musical compositions made a large number of people alive to the beauties of our musical heritage. Sanskrit works on musicology from Bharata's *Natyasastra* down to Govinda Dixetar's *Sangrahachudamani* and also, Telugu, Tamil, Malayali, Canarese, and English books were published. *Sivashtapadi* and *Ramashtapadi* and *Tyagarjaashtapadi* in imitation of *Gita Govinda* also were composed. Several English works like *oriental music in staff Notation* by Chinnaswami Moodli (1892). *The Grammar of music, Flute and its principles, Ragas of Karnatic music, musical reminiscences, essays on music and other text-books and treatises (annotated)* were written by M.S. Ramaswamy Iyer, C.S. Iyer, N.S. Iyer, N.S. Ramachandran, C.B. Naidu, T. Laxman Pillai, Prof. Sambamurti, Dr. V. Raghavan, and others were published in English, *Kritimanimala* (Ramanuja Iyengar), *Tyagaraja Hridayam, Gana Bhaskaram* etc., by K.V.S. Iyengar, and *Sangeeta Sampradaya Pradarsini* (Anthology of music) in 3 volumes by Subbha Rama Dixtar, *The Tamil opera Nandanar* (1861), *Pallavi Svarakalpavalli* (Nathmuni), *Gayakasulochanam, Parijatam*, etc., by Singarachar, *South Indian music series 5 vols.* by Prof. Sambamoorti. *Purandar's Devar Namas* by Lalitangi were the few among a large number of books on the science of music.

MUSIC CONFERENCES were organised since 1912. The introduction of music in the Educational curriculum has made the systematic study of music possible in universities. The Madras university has opened a chair for music research. The Madras Music Academy, a private organisation has been doing lot of service to the cause of music by opening a Technical

Musical Culture of Tamil Nad

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Training School and a publication Dept. It has been publishing a journal in English with illuminating and instructive articles. The Radio, the Gramophone and the Cinema also have subscribed some quota to music. The central Government has sanctioned the central Academy of Karnatic music at Madras. The universities of Travancore, Mysore and Chidambaram have adopted music as an optional subject. The advent of the Microphone has enhanced even feeble-voiced people to reach large audiences. Agencies for the spread of music have fast multiplied. Demonstration of music and dance by large groups of students are now an annual feature. Mrs. Rukmani Devi revived the Kathakali, Bharat Natyam and Koravanji types of dances and operas at Kalakshetra. Much progress in the direction of dress, choreography, costumes, screens, and stage-lighting has been made. The institution of musical endowments art-festivals, anniversaries of great composers and springing up a large number of Sabhas such as Ind : Fine Arts Association, Jagannatha Bhakta Samaj, Tyaga Brahma Sabha, Parthasarathi music sabha (Triplicane). The Tamil Isai Sangha, Rasika Ranjani Sabha are other welcome features of this period.

CHAPTER II

Bhakti Movement

The Bhakti movement has many phases in the real religion for the man in the street to follow easily. It is the culmination of the true religious spirit which transforms the life of a person and takes him Godward. The number of mystic singers and saints who have existed in India is very large.

The 7th and 8th centuries have witnessed a religious revival associated with the Bhakti movement, and connected with the theistic and popular sects of Vaishnava and Siva. The revival was spread far and wide by means of songs composed by the leaders of the movement and so resulted in a great development of musical activity among the people generally and in the spread of musical education and culture. The Nayanars and Alvars were solely responsible for this religious advancement through the medium of Bhajans. In India, the temple and the stage were the best media of instruction in ancient and medieval ages, and religion was a part of the social life which depended largely on music.

India has produced the greatest saints, philosophers and scholars and artists, who served their 'mathrubhumi' in their respective spheres. The origin of their devotional songs is from the ancient Chando and Prabondha Gayan by devotees of different times and places, who delivered the Divine message through the inspiration of Bhajan songs.

SHAIVAITE SAINTS. The characteristics of Shaivism are the exaltation of Shiva above other Gods. The Svetaswatara Upanishad resembles Bhagavad Gita and declares the supremacy of Shiva Bhakti, over Vaishnavism. There is an extensive literature on Saivism in Tamil and Tamil songs are intensely

theistic and devotional and centred round devotion to Siva. The Devara Hymns of the three saints, Tirugnana Sambandhar, Triavakarsu (Appar) and Sundaramurthigal and Manikkavachakar who all belong to the 7th and 8th centuries have been collected in a book called Tirumurai. These Hymns with their intimate personal appeal to Siva, as the Lord of the Universe rank very high in the devotional literature of India.

The songs of the Vaishnava Samayacharyas, the Tiruppugazh of Arunagirinathar, the songs of the Siddhars, the poems of Tayumanavar and Ramalingaswamigal and Tiruvachagam of Manikkavachaka form part of the Tamil sacred music.

1. TIRUMULAR was a great saivaite siddha in the galaxy of Tamil saints. He entered the carcase of a shepherd and composed three thousand hymns.

2. APPAR (600-690 B.C.) a contemporary of Mahendra Pallava was born at Conjeevaram in a Vellala family. He was a great devotee and Akasavani conferred on him the title of "Tirunavakar" "King of Pious words." He is the ideal of दस माग. In collaboration with Sambandhar he composed 49 thousand songs.

3. SAMBANDHAR (690 B.C.) was born at Shiyali (Tanjore Dt.). Owing to the blessings of Parvati Devi, he got Divine intuition and composed songs. As he got divine wisdom, he was known as Jnanasambandar. He was a great spiritualist and composed 16 thousand songs. His disciple was Tiru Nilkanta Alwar. His ideal is पुत्र मार्ग of Prahlad type.

4. SUNDARNAYANAR comes of a priestly family. He mentioned the 63 siddhars in his songs. His ideal is सहचर मार्ग and his hymns breathe a sense of freedom and intimacy in relation to God and are often enlivened with humour.

5. MANIKAVACHAKAR (10th cent.) is a great devotee of Lord Isa. His principal work is Tiruva-

chakam which is held in high estimation even today. His songs stir the human emotions to divine ecstasy. He is the "Pole star" of the Pandyan Rajya. Siva removed all his Purva samskara and blessed him with a melodious voice and ordered him to compose and sing songs. He renounced his life and constructed a temple for Siva at Perundur. The term Manikkavachakar means "Ruby utterances" and Tiruvachakam means "Divine message." It breathes a Divine spirit and has served as beacon light to crores of devotees and a mere study of it kindles flames of divine ecstasy. Manikkavachakar suffered tortures of the king like Bhadrachal Ramadoss and merged into the Lord of light like Meerabai.

(1530 A.D.) ARUNAGIRI NATHAR of Tiruvannamalai, learnt music in boyhood but led an indulgent life. By sheer force of poetic genius and devotional fervour, he attained a high place in the affections of the Tamil people. His devotional songs form the most popular literature in TamilNad and thousands of his songs are sung to-day by Tamil devotees. The quick ascent of his cadences the glowing beauty of his art and the sublime sentiments they breathe are enjoyed by the bulk of humanity. No musical concert is said to be complete without these songs. Tevaram, Tiruvachagam Tiruvoimozai, Tiruppgazh and Tayaumanavar are the popular pieces in a concert of Tamil Isai.

(1742. A. D.) TAYUMANUVAR son of Kediliappa Pillai of Vedaranyam, was a non-sectarian by temperament. His hymns are regarded as Upanishads and have a sweet and melodious flow combining spiritual simplicity and sincerity. They show a perfect balance of Jnana and Bhakti and are the valued treasures of Tamil Nad.

(1833-76). Ramalingaswamy is the author of a garland of Verses known as Arutpa. He was the son of Ramayya Pillai and a devotee of Sri Skanda from his ninth year. He attained Valli Nayaki Ammal's grace and from that moment he poured forth in a pure and pellucid stream, the verses

which delight millions of Tamilians. All the above saints encouraged Siva's worship and their hymns are full of Vedic and Puranic stories.

SRIDHAR DIXIT (Ayyawal) of Tiruvisanallur was a great devotee and wrote devotional kirtans. He also popularised Namasankirtan.

BODHENDRA SATGURUSWAMI, the son of Keshava Panduranga Yogi was known as Purushotham in his Purva Ashram. Sri Viswadiendra Saraswati of Kamakoti Peetha bestowed attention on Purushotham's education and attended to his initiation into Sanyasam at Banaras. On his way back Bodhendra Swami (Purushotham) alighted at Puri and met Laxmikanta Kavi and received a copy of Nama Koumudi as a present. After his return to Kanchi from Puri, he shifted to Tiruvadamaruthur where he emphasized the importance of Bhagavan Nama Kirtan in Kaliyuga. The Bhajan form of worship became popular thereafter. He attained Siddhi in 1752.

SADASIVA BRAHMENDRA SARASWATI of Tiruvisanallur was a disciple of his own uncle, Rambhadra Dixitar and he later continued his studies under Parama Sivendra Saraswati. He soon became a great Yogi and wrote a number of Kirtans in Sanskrit with the signature of परमहंस. He also wrote Siva Manasika Puja, Atma Vidya Vilas and Brahma Sutra-Vritti: He took to silence and lived on the banks of Amaravati in Pudukota State. He merged with Parabrahma at Nerur. (1887).

HIS HOLINESS MAHA MANDALESHWAR PUJYA SWAMI SIVANANDA SARASWATI MAHA-RAJ—"SANKIRTAN SAMRAT."

Sankirtan brings Darsan of God or attainment of Divine consciousness in Kaliyuga. Sankirtan is the easiest, surest, safest and quickest path for attaining God Realisation.

Sri Sivanandaji's greatest delight is undoubtedly in singing the glory of God and the sacred name of the Lord. Endowed with a rich and melodious voice

and well versed in music, he has inspired the most sceptical scoffers and pitiable unbelievers to sing and dance to the utter amazement of their kith and kin. No wonder then that Swamiji has earned for himself, the Immortal Name of "Sankirtan Samrat." A devotee of Parabhakti, he once began in a strain of divine ecstasy. This seer is a great and unrivalled exponent of Sankirtan which is Vouchsafed by the several recorded songs of his in the Ashram often played to give impetus to Bhaktas. He is another Gouranga or Gora Kumbhar, utterly lost in ecstasy. When the saint is immersed in Bhajan, he is completely beside himself. Those who participate in such spiritual concerts at Rishikesh only can understand how Gurudev sheds a Divine Halo around him and surcharges it with Goldliness, deep devotion and religious fervour. Sivanandaji, the sage of Ananda Kutir, is a unique personality. He is a Karma Vir, Bhakta, Jnani, Yogi, a brilliant speaker, Versatile genius, journalist, musician, composer (Vaggeyakara), a Doctor of Divinity and of Medicine, a philanthropist, founder of the D.L. Society—an International Religious Institute, organised in short—all noble things personified in one. He alone has the power to quench the Spiritual thirst of men in Varied walks of life by his hypnotic power.

BORN IN THE YEAR 1887 at Pattamadai, Tirunelvali Dist., a brilliant scion of Sri Appayya Dixitar—the author of 100 famous Sanskrit works. Swamiji's parents Sri Venku Iyer, and Parvati Ammal were paragons of Virtue, piety and devotion.

A specialist in tropical medicine and surgery and the editor of "Ambrosia" left to Federated Malaya states and practised as a Doctor from 1913-22. Then he resigned the job and returned to India and visited many Holy places as a homeless and without any thought for the morrow.

In 1924, he made Rishikesh his abode and received Sanyasa Diksha from Sri Swami Visvanand Saraswati.

Bhakti Movement

15

Now he is the beacon light on the lofty Himalayas—the citadel of Parvati and Parameshwar shedding life, love and lustre far and wide. His name is the never failing guide.

Yogi Sivanandaji is verily one among the spiritual leaders of modern India who have won high eminence in the East as well as in the West. His Holy Name is hailed all over the world by thousands of seekers in the two hemispheres.

In 1936, he founded the D.L. Society and had unequivocally declared that there can be no happiness without divine life which is the very antithesis of materialism.

A descendant of the great Appayya Dixitar—a pearl from the sacred bed of Tambaraparani—a man of letters—a patron of music and propagandist of Bhakti cult—has blossomed into a Doctor of Divinity.

With his unique panacea for all the ills and desires of the All soul, in short, he is a veritable beacon light to the benighted world doomed in materialism.

RAMANANDA YATI: 18th Century: wrote the Gowri Raga Prabandha.

SUBHRAMANYA BHARATI. Native of Ettiyapur and the author of many National songs was a great politician and Non-co-operator. The great Sankara Nair pronounced that Bharati's Keertan would restore to a life a dead being. He gave a great impetus to the Swarajists through the medium of his inspiring songs.

SWAYAMPACASA YATI : 1860 : A scholar in Telugu and sanskrit was living in Mayura Kshetra. His musical pieces testify to his knowledge in music.

AKKILSWAMY: 1810: devotee of Sri Krishna. He fell a victim to a serious malady and lived in a village Kolladam on the banks of the Cauvery. He asked his disciples to come and see

him one evening at the river bank. He composed at that time a kirtan in Kalyani, "Thavaka, Kara, Kamale" and his disciples came at the appointed time and took him home. He composed many pieces in praise of Krishna and attained salvation.

SIVA RAMASRAYA: 1815. was born in an Andra Brahmin family at Laxmipur village, Ramnad District and became the disciple of Maruda Nalluri Swamy. He composed many Bhakti geetas, Utsava-Sampradaya Kirtans, Ashtapadis and Dravida Raman kirtans; He visited all the Holy places at the age of 20 and finally settled at Tiruvarur and composed Telugu and sansacrit compositions. He published a book "Nija Bhajan Sukha Paddhati at Madras and passed away in 1897.

RAMAKOTI SWAMI: is an embodiment of Pandharpur tradition and as such is an interesting study to us. The tradition is wound up intimately with the Bhakti cult, which is believed to be the only path for salvation. This cult has produced great saints who have been its exemplars. A galaxy of Bhaktas, Nandanar, Ramadoss, Chaitanya, Jayadeva, Tukaram, Purandardas, Tulcidas, are very great names to conjure with in every house hold. In their lives they felt the presence of God about them. They believed in the maxim that there is nothing true excepting God and nourished their being in the effulgence of that truth. Judging as a mere story-letter, he cannot claim to any rank but a sincere votary at the lotus feet of God and an unqualified Bhakta, Ramakoti is admirable. The songs of Purandar and Tulsi coming from his mouth, have a rare flavour of realism, as the heart accompanies the word and the tune. His eloquence is impassioned and genuine and his music inspiring, his narrative interesting and exposition edifying although he is indifferent to explore the emotional possibilities of an artist, he simply utilises them as a convenient peg for his moralisations on the transitoriness of life and worldly belonging. But there is an ever irridicent glow of fervour and realism

in his performance as he devoutly and faithfully portrays the lives of the Saints which were remarkable for their emotional crises. As a Bhakti Propagandist, his services to society are invaluable in the days of rampant scepticism and atheism.

SRI T. P. KODANDA RAMA IYER.—Pioneer of Bhajan Sampradaya (1861-1934): When atheism and adharma prevails in the Universe, great men appear in Bharatavarsha to protect dharma. Amongst such great men are Lord Chaitanya of Bengal, and Bodhendraswamy of Sri Kamakotipita of Kanchi. The former in North India and the latter in South India promulgated the greatness of Nama Sankirtan and Japa and paved the way to attain Moksha.

Sri Kodandarama is one who introduced Sankirtan Sampradaya in Madras. He was born at Shedinapuram to Panchapakasan and Srimati Dharamambal. His father was a religious man who used to write Sundarakanda on palm-leaves and present it to friends. In 1886, he entered the order of Sanyas and attained Samadhi. When he attended the lectures of Swami Vivekananda at Madras, his mind was changed and he began to read the works of Tukaram. He got love for Nama sankirtan and he conducted Bhajans in his house along with his brother. He used to celebrate the Rama Navami Utsava for 10 days and conducted poor feeding. He became a Varkari to Pandharpur for Ashada Sudi Ekadasi. A disciple of Gunda Maharaj of Deglur samasthana, initiated him in the worship of Lord Vithoba. He resigned his job in 1914 and constructed the Vithoba temple at Madras and laid the foundation for promulgating Marathi Bhajans at Triplicane, Madras.

He celebrated the Kumbhabhishaka festival in 1921, with his Guru and fellow disciples. He has published Bhajan-paddhati, Bhajan-utsava-paddhati, Leela Tarangini, Astapadi, Hindustani Kirtan Mala and Deep Bhajan in Telugu and Jnaneshwari in Tamil. He left his earthly tenement in 1934.

CHAPTER III

Opera Writers

ARUNACHALA GOPALA KRISHNA BHARATI AND KAVIKUNJARA BHARATI: Arunachala (1711-1778) was born in Tellyyadi to Nallathambi Pillai. Under the tutelage of Ambulavanam Kavirayar, he made great progress in the study of Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit. He wrote the great epic Ramayana in Kirtan form in 1771—known to be the first opera in Tamil language. His disciples, Chatianathapuram Kondanda Ram and Venkaraman ably assisted him in setting tunes. The Ragas of the pieces are quite apt and fit in with the Rasas of the songs. Kirtans from this are very popular in Tamilian household. He was honoured by Raja Tuljaji and Manali Muthukrishna celebrated Kumbhabhishakam. Ananta Bharati followed him and wrote the Ramayana Uttara Kanda in Kirtan form.

GOPALA KRISHNA BHARATI was born at Nari-manam village. His father Ramaswami Bharati and grand father Kodandaram, were great vainikas. He studied Vedas under Govinda Yati. He practised Yoga and attained perfection in music. He gave Kalakshepam and earned money with which he made many religious endowments at Chidambaram and Mayavaram. He is the author of Nandanar Charitra in which he wrote many Kirtans. He has popularised

the extinct musical forms like the Irusolelankara, Nondichindu, etc. He is the author of Inana Chindu, Inana Kummi, Iyarpagai, Tiruneelakantha and Karaikal Ammayar Charitras. He died in 1881.

His disciple, Vedanayakam Pillai (1824-1889) is the author of Sarva Samaya Samarasa Kirtans and Tanjore Krishna Bhagavatar popularised Nandanar.

KAVIKUNJANA BHARATI (1810-96) was born in Perungarai Village to Subramanya Bharati. He was very pious and utilised his poetic and musical gifts to sing the glories of God. Gowri Vallabha, Raja of Sivuganga, Muthu Ramalinga Setupati and Raja Ponnuswami Thevar honoured him suitably. He wrote Skanda Purana Kirtanas in 1865 A.D. which is considered as the greatest contribution to Karnatic music. He died in 1896.

CHAPTER IV

Harī Katha

HARIKATHA OR KALAKSHEPA is by a single individual with dance, music and speech. The theme may be religious, historical, social or national. This is the favourite method of religious exposition in India and is usually attended by males, and females of all classes. On the model of Buvas performances of Maharashtra, South Indian performers introduced Kathas and inserted Abhangas and Kirtans in it.

A Haridoss has to possess, the learning of the Scholar, the sacred line of a Purānik, the eloquence of an orator, the excellences of an actor, and the merits of a musical expert, dancer and expressionist. He had to have at his command the tact and ability to suit himself to his art to the Varying conditions of life in which he found himself. He has to acquire the Secret of giving an exhibition within a very short compass of time as also the power to expand it without any detriment to the proportion of the element. Even now the Maratha Buvas of the old school know how to exhibit the katha in two hours, blending grammar, poetics, poetry, music, dance, religious and secular topics. This system was introduced in Tanjore, by Joshi Ramchander Bava Morgaokar of Gwalior---who possessed phenomenal powers. Plain living and high thinking, above all, is the chief motto. In fact it is the Maratha (Katha performers) Haridas or Bhagavatar that gave incentive to the South Indian Bhagavatars. The prominent Haridas of the South or (1) Tanjore Krishna Bhagavatar, (2) Paratap Ram Bhagavatar, (3) M. Chidambar Bhagavatar, (4) Panchapkesa Bhagavatar, (5) S. Vaidyanath Bhagavatar, (6) Muthayya Bhagavatar.

TANJORE KRISHNA BHAGAVATAR: If the art of Katha reached a high level of excellence in South India, it is due chiefly to the yeoman service of Krishna Bhagavatar. Rightly he can be called the "Father of Kalakshepas" who evinced an aptitude for music even in his teens. He came into contact with eminent musicians of his time in Tanjore, through whose kindness, he acquired efficiency in playing violin, Swarabat and drum.

In order to quench his desire, to learn the sterling compositions of Tyagaraja, he went to Tillasthanam Rama Iyengar and learnt the compositions in correct style. He also heard the Kathas of a number of Bhagavatars and became familiar with the northern and southern styles of exposition. In his Kathas he attempted a harmonious blending of the best in the two styles. Although his Sanskrit scholarship was not of a high order, he made up for this deficiency, by his proficiency in Marathi, Telugu, Hindustani and other languages. The success of his Kalakshepas was chiefly due to the fact that they were fully saturated with the elements of Bhava and Rasa. His narration of the story was quite realistic and graphic. That is why Pandits and Pamaras alike attended his Kathas with great zeal and enthusiasm. His intimate knowledge of Abhinaya Shastra was another factor that contributed to the excellence of his performances. He also exhibited his skill in Nritya, by dancing to all the fine complicated jatis in the time measure. Endowed with a handsome, attractive and commanding personality, he proved himself as the most ideal person for the job. His Abhinaya naturally drew the approbation even from Vidvans. Although not gifted with a captivating voice, his sparkling tonal touches and scholarly renderings of pieces brought on him encomiums from eminent men like Maha Vaidhi. His remarkable Sruti Jnana was kept up, right through his performances. His cymbals gave a note which coincided with his own tunic notes or with the harmonics and even the notes

produced by his Gajjal (ankle bells) bore a similar relationship. The consolidated effect of these autophonic instruments and his vocal music contributed in a high degree to the enjoyment of his performances. Leading personages of his day invited him and profusely honoured him. It was his good fortune to have Pauchapakes Bhagavator and Marudappa as his accompanying vocalists and the combined streams of all the three voices produced a delightful effect. The balanced construction of the sentences as also the polished renderings of songs were all carefully worked out to perfection by him before hand. No one got satiated by listening to his kathas even on the same theme, a number of times and interest was generated every time in a person to listen to his marvellous performance. Ramachandra Maharaj of Pudukotta invited him and honoured. Eminent scholars like Perithyur Krishna sastri, a veteran scholar and an Amsa of Valmiki and Ramasubbu Sastri took delight in his Kalakeshapam is a proof in itself that his kalakeshepas were of a high order.

PRATAPA RAMA BHAGAVATOR (Poovanuru) Prataparama was the son of Kalyanarama---a Hari katha expert of distinction. Very easily he mastered the theory of music and set great store by a knowledge of grammar and tradition as opposed to mere lakshya. He had no patience with those who plumped for a creative approach to the art with scant attention to the essentials of Lakshanagnana. He was a great exponent of Dixitars kirtans. He was a very orthodox and led a life of deep piety, austerity and simplicity.

KIRTANACHARYA C. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR, B.A. (1736-1867). Born at Tanjore, he worked in the Educational Department for 40 years when he was at Vijayanagar, and practiced Veena and music under Ramanayya Doss and under Gopal Iyengar and Krishna Bhagavatar at Madras. He made an exhaustive and critical study of classical music. He was a great

critic and he fought with the government until music is prescribed as a subject in the S. S. L. C curriculum of the Madras University. He was a member of the Board of Studies and advisor to the Madras University, Academy of Music and Anna-malai Universities and his suggestions were much valued. He was an expert in delivering Harikathas in Tamil. Therefore the title of "Kirtanacharya" was conferred and Vimarsakacharya on account of his criticism. He did great service to music literature for having got notation prepared for all the current Tyagaraj Kritis. The title of "Abhinava Tyaga Brahman" was conferred. He contributed many articles on music to the Tamil and the English dailies and periodicals and magazines. He published 50 works in English and Tamil under the series of Ramayan Vilas. He led an ideal life and passed away on 25.2.1936.

PROF. R. SRINIVASAN M.A. Retired principal, of the Maharaja's College, Trivandrum. Born on 21-9-1887, in Trichy District, graduated from the Presidency college with distinction in Mathematics in 1927. He passed M.A. in first class and was honoured with the Stuart prize, Marsh Prize, and Pitti Munuswami Chetti's Gold medals. He acted as asst. Mathematics Professor in the Presidency College and entered Travancore College service in 1910. He is also a well known Theosophist and associated with the activities of the Theosophical society, Humanitarian society, Scout movement, Travancore Art Festival, The Academy of Music, and the Amateur Dramatic club. He was the Promoter of Drama, music, and Kalakshepas in Travancore. He himself was a prominent actor, play-wright and Katha performer. He is a member of the Expert Committee of the Madras Music Academy and Travancore Music Academy. He was awarded the Vira Srinkhala in appreciation of his official service. He is now actively engaged in reforming music and composing pieces in Ragas Hemavati, Sarasangi, Goud mallar and Narayani. He

is the author of Tamil dramas, Meerabai and Susila. He acted as the Director of Travancore Broad-casting Station in 1947. He was selected for a Jury's post by the All India Radio Committee, Delhi.

MANGUDI CHIDAMBAR BHAGAVATAR (HARI-KATHA) (14.12.1880 — 1938): Born at Tiruvadi, his ancestor Ganam Tirumalaya was a court musician and composer at the court of Tulja Raja of Tanjore. He inherited all the distinguished qualities of his father. His family Diety was Nataraja of Chidambaram. He joined the School along with Mahamahopadhyaya, Kuppuswami Sastri in 1894 and passed F.A. examination and in due course took the Law Degree. He was also a brilliant actor. He developed a taste for music by listening to Tanjore Krishna Bhagavatar. His bent of mind and his versatility found a greater scope and a more congenial atmosphere in the career of Bhagavatar. He was a great Harikathak whose narration of Katha was as instructive as it was attractive. His ideal was Krishnan Bhagavathar. He belongs to the Marathi school of Kalakshepa which combined the dramatic presentation of story and character with exquisite music and a harmonious synthesis of bhava, raga and tala. He maintained a proportion between speech and song and avoided the temptation to introduce irrelevant compositions for the sake of music. The music which heightens the interest of the narration was always of a high order. The insertion of Tyagaraj kritis here and there, was very apt. By giving importance to the sahitya of songs, he expounded them with a rare insight into the poet's mind. His exposition of Ramayana deserves special mention. His knowledge of Sanskrit and English imparted a peculiar charm and freshness to his narration. He held up to his hearers the great ideal of the Hindu life---the plain living and high thinking. His exposition of Hindu Dharma was liberal and broad-minded. The level of his discourse was high and he avoided the easy resort to coarse vulgarity. He was a keen

student of contemporary life in its individual and corporate aspect. His Katha abounded in numerous apt references to the latest incidents in social or political life and discourses in science. No event of importance escaped his illuminating comment. His satire and humour, his allusions and anecdotes added colour and piquancy to his narration. His incisive wit and sharp sarcasm exposed the shams and hypocrisies of the degenerate side of modern civilisation. He had the most exacting standards of a Kathak. Sound knowledge of languages, musical skill and abhinaya, dramatic powers, eloquence, imagination, thorough grasp of religious truths, a prodigious memory, and a Kaleidoscopic presentation of commonplace facts. He was saturated with the art he expounds. Otherwise, how is it possible to explain the Brobdingnagian forms of the famous Bhagavatar of Mangudi easily attuning his voice, speech and gait to the tenderest and toughest of ragas. Thus does true art transcend physical handicaps. He was a voracious reader and he possessed a big Indological library.

PANCHPAKESAN BHAGAVATAR (Harikatha): In the field of Harikatha, it is an indomitable fact that the late Krishna Bhagavatar of Tanjore, reached a level of excellence unsurpassed by any one. Panchapakesan had his tutelage under the superhuman Krishna, providing the chorus for him. To a deep insight into classical tradition, he added a sound Swarajnana. Later on he exhibited consummate skill in handling the violin. After the death of his master, he kept the flag flying in quite a fitting manner. Those who appreciate the greatness of the master, acknowledged that Panchapakesan was a worthy disciple. He had a charming voice which was perfectly Sruti Suddha. He was a great exponent of Tyagaraja Kritis. His proficiency in Hindustani music enriched the technique of Harikatha. He pleased even Marathas with his recital of Abhangas. His devotion to Tyagaraja bore fruit in years of self-

less, meritorious service at Tyagaraja's shrine. He used to attend the Tiruvisalore and Govindapuram festivals. His son Dorappa was an expert Gothu player

SULAMANGALAM VAIDYANATH BHAGAVATAR: The speciality of his music was his command of large number of Tyagaraja Kritis which he sang in whole and in part according to the context and from the rich devotional ideas contained and which he quoted during the course of his exposition. He is gifted with genial humour which vivified his talk and the ease with which he spoke is noteworthy.

GAYAKA SIKHAMANI MUTTAYYA BHAGAVATAR (1877-1945): Of the many ways and means by which spiritually inventive genius of the country has sought ethics and morals and devotion to God in the minds of the understanding masses, Kalakshepam is a unique and interesting one. Roughly, a Kalakshepam is a discourse on Bhakti in the form of story in a musical setting. Connoisseurs of art attend a Kalakshepa mostly for art's sake and for the interesting variety of music that it contains, while religious-minded people and ladies who perhaps are the real mainstay of any religion in the world, flock to it with equal zeal, while the music of the concert proper tends more and more towards intellectual pleasure of the initiated, that of the Harikatha, has a large and perhaps more universal appeal than the former and a special colour given to it in the setting of a story. Hence if a Kalakshepa has any special place at all among musical entertainments, its musical part should be of no lower quality or standard than that of the regular musical concert.

Amongst the few musicians that combine good narration and high quality of music, Sri Muttaya Bhagavata is a leading luminary. Among men of art whose name and happiness are ordinarily supposed to be at the mercy of random patrons of art, the one who has earned the good will and esteem of Rajas and musicians, the cultured and common folk is Sri Bhagavata.

He had got a commanding personality well dressed and polished in manners with a winsome smile and oversuavity of expression, he moved among the group of his disciples, like a Prince in a Durbar. He always spoke very high of his life and art. That was his star. There is none to rival him in the fluency or mellifluousness of speech in Tamil. He was a good humorist and had wit at his fingers' ends. As a linguist, he was acquainted with the spoken vernaculars, Telugu, Tamil and Malayalam and the classic Sanskrit as well. He was able to tackle easily and engage the different linguistic elements.

SCHOLARSHIP: His tender age prompted him to compose folk-songs and was popular among the villagers. He was the disciple of Sambasiva Iyer. He became a platform artist, and afterwards came under the influence of one Krishna Bhatt Haridas, who initiated him into the beauties of the art. His natural gifts, his training under a great master in music, his contest with veteran musicians and Bhagavatars of his early age—all contributed to make him the master of the art of Kṛlakshepa with a combination of many rare qualities. His songs and Varnamattus are of perennial interest. He was a great Vaggeyakar and Lakshya-Lakshan Vidwan, who composed 108 Kirtans in many rare Ragas in praise of Chamundeswari Devi of Mysore. He was the only man who constantly delved into the mysteries of Lakshana aspect of music and who can demonstrate on the same. South India is rich in its musical lore and composers and after an Interrugnum of comparative sterility, since the death of great masters, he came out as a composer of no mean quality. His compositions have an individuality—vigorous and engaging with an avalanche of graded Sangathis. Although he was not gifted, he had a dominant will-power and capacity which brought him honour and patronage from many a ruling Prince. He not only enjoyed the patronage of princes and patricians but also made many deserving musicians enjoy the

benefit of such patronage as is evident in the case of Sammangudi, G. N. Bala Subrahmanyam and Musirif. He was actuated by higher ideals in art. As a man, he is good, kind, generous. He can't deny a request. He is also a factor in the renaissance of music. To know him is an honour and to hear him is pleasure and instruction.

Want of circumspection has caused his obliging nature to go a little too far to the extent of being exploited by interested persons to the embarrassment of music and musicians with a result not worthy of good tradition in music. He underwent severe privations in his career and in the later days of his life he basked in the sunshine of Royal patronage.

He was born at Harikisanallur in 1877, as the son of Lingam Iyer who spent three lakhs of rupees in the good way of encouraging noted musicians. His father himself was a master musician who was snatched away by the cruel hands of Death in prime of manhood. Young Muttay's taste for music was kindled by listening to famous Vidwans in his house. He continued his Vedic and Sanskrit learning till his tenth year under his uncle a Mahamahopadhyaya. He left for Tiruwaayya, the seat of music and requested Vidwan Sambasiva Iyer to teach him music. For ten years he had typical Gurukulvasa and completed his course in music.

DISTINCTION, 1899. In his 22nd year, he displayed his talents before the Maharaj of Travancore and got a prize of shawls and Atta Thoda. His name spread far and wide. He was invited by the Rajas of Cochin and Ramnad for concerts. The Raja of Ramnad, Bhaskar Setupati presented him rupees seven thousand, in 1901 being impressed with his marvellous exposition of Sankarabharana Raga.

In 1906, he delivered musical devotional discourses and received a remuneration of Rs. 150 which gradually rose up to Rs. 1200 for a single day's entertainment of 4 hours.

In 1913, the zamindar of Andtpitti invited him and patronised him for ten years. He induced the Zamindar to spend seven lacs of Rupees on artists. The Raja died prematurely and left Muthayya alone to struggle for life. Muthayya lost all humour for three years.

In 1927, he got invitations from Calcutta and Rangoon. To recoup his mental equilibrium, he toured India for three months and earned 25 thousands. In 1928, he visited Mysore during Dassara and got a present of 2000 rupees, a diamond ring, and killat. He was made the Astan Vidvan. He undertook a pilgrimage to Banares and Allahabad, in 1929 on the eve of his daughter's death. In 1929, he got the title of Gayaka Sikamani for having composed 108 songs on Devi Chamundi. He was also honoured with Darbar Dress, and a gold medal on which was carved the figure of the Deity and a necklace studded with pearls and diamonds. His services were requisitioned by the Music Academy of Madras. He delivered Extension Lectures at Various Universities

In 1936, he visited Travancore state and exhibited musical talents before the Rajapramukh during Chitra festival. The Maharaja presented him with a purse of two thousand Rupees, a toda studded with precious stones and a pair of beautiful shawls. Immediately he was appointed as the Principal of Swati Tirunal's Music College. He drafted a curriculum dealing with the compositions of S. Tirunal. He published a book Chitrodaya. He was a member of the Madras Senate and Board of Examiners of Mysore University. Being a devotee, he performed Scanda shasti till his death. He died in 1945.

CHAPTER V

Vocalists and Composers

PURANDAR DOSS (Father of Karnatic Music) (1480—1566 A. D.) The Sixteenth century produced a famous Karnatic trio, the great King of Vizianagar, Sri Krishna Devaraya in Politics, the learned spiritual pontiff Vyasaraya in religion, and the saintly bard Purandar in the field of Music. He was the greatest of the Haridasas, who like the revered saints of Panaharpur, Jnanadev, Namadev Sakkubai, and Gorakumbhar, played a very important part in spreading Bhakti movement. One Naraharitirtha of Udipi, was the earliest composer. Kanakadasa is another name connected with the Haridas movement. Purandar was born in Purandargad, in Poona District to a Madhva Brahmin Varadappa—a diamond merchant by profession. Regarded as an Avatar of Narada, he was a great misser in his youth until his eyes were opened by his shrewd and devoted loyal wife Saraswati whereupon he gave away all his property in charity and went abroad as an intinerant missionary, delivering his message to suffering humanity. He became a disciple of Vyasaraya. He was supreme master of both Lakshya and Lakshana. He studied and mastered Indian music and to suit the conditions of his time, he systematised practical music by working many Lakshana Granthas, Geethas and Suladis—all about 50 thousand pieces to enable the student of music to acquire the art with ease. His songs are not subjective. They look like having been suggested by daily occurrences in the outside world. Wide knowledge, rich experience and unbounded love for humanity are clearly noticeable in his songs. It looks as if Tyaqraj was the modern Incarnation of

Purandar for the mission with which Tyagaraj preached through his songs was almost identical with the one preached by Purandar long ago. Purandar can rightly be described as the "Father of Karnatic Music", for it was he who laid the solid foundation of Karnatic music on which the Musical Trinity later built so fine a structure. Purandar enriched both Kannada literature and Karnatic music by his compositions which appeal to Pandits and peasants alike. He rescued Karnatic from the chaos and corruption of alien influences. He spent his later years at Pandharpur and passed away in 1564. His teachings are universal in appeal and represent the common elements of all faiths. His life is a brilliant vindication of the principle that what serves the world is not rituals and ceremonies but truth and love. The light of Purandar shines unobscured through eternity.

The padas of Kshetrajna resemble those of the Dasar. No higher glory in Sangeeta is possible than that the great Dasa is the prototype of Vaggeyakaras of the calibre of Annamachari, Kshetrajna Tyagayya, Dixitar and Shamsastri. Although many of his songs are meant for Sankeertan purposes, a large number of them are surcharged with musical excellence of the highest quality. His compositions are the embodiments of raga sanchar as of exquisite beauty and are cited in renowned Lakshana Granthas as unquestioned authority. Tuljaji gives reference to many of his compositions in S. Saramruta. No tribute to the genius of Purandar could adequately express our indebtedness to him for those masterly creations of art known as Suladis. These compositions in his hands became the noblest embodiments of Bhav, Rag and Tala. He has composed many Gitas, Tayas, Prabhandas and Ugaboghas. The Alap Padhati is well-pictured in his Kirtanas in the same raga. Few musicologists have made the same contribution to the pedagogy of Music as Purandar. The present system of Karnatic Music, as followed in the South by beginners in scrupulous fidelity is the one

formulated by him. The gradation of Swara, Alankara and Gitas in Mayamalawagowla and Mallahari ragas from the bedrock of the teaching methods of Karnatic music. The system of talas now in vogue is known as his Suladi Sapta talas. His music is as pure as his soul and his glory as a composer will shine for ever. He is the Marga Darsi to the Music Trinity. In fine, it is not the Kannada Bhasha of his but his music which has gathered the Canarese, the Tamils, the Malayalis and the Telugus into a common bond of cultural affinity.

SHAMA SASTRI: (ALIAS VENKATASUBRAHMANYA) (1763-1827)

The poet's supreme art emanated from psychic dream word with its verbal form idea was its mental message-Rasa was its soul the poet's words were its channel. Sruti was its life-Swara its heart-beat Laya its very breath, Rakti its brain, and bhakti its very soul. Our Indian Art once has been raised as an edifice of beauty upon spiritual consciousness. Our music drama etc., surged out of the psychic emotions and returned to that spiritual source. Spiritual ecstasy has been symbolised as Nataraja and in the Rasa Dance of the blissful Antaratma. It was the essence of Bhagavata, which was the ecstatic dance of Paramatma embracing Jivatma.

Shama Sastri made his life a dynamic offering to the Universal Mahasakti. The Spirit of self-offering is the 'summum bonum' of our arts. Karnatic music reached its summit of perfection between 1775 and 1850. Amongst the galaxy of musical celebrities, Shamasastri, originally was a Vada Desattu Vadimal Brahmin, of Bodhayan Sutra and Goutama Gotra and lived in Cumbum in Kurnool District and his ancestors were therefore called Cumbattars. Later they migrated to Conjeeveram and accepted archakaship in the temple there. Troublous time arose and they shifted to Gingee and Udayarpalam and finally to Tanjore in 1781 in the time of Raja Tuljaji and took shelter under him.

Vocalists and Composers

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"Shamsastri" the pseudonym of Subrahmanyam was born in Tiruvurur to Vishwanadhayya in the year 1763. When he came of age, he was given sound education in Sanskrit and Telugu. But he was destined to be great in the field of music. The musical education of Shama under his maternal uncle seemed to have been desultory and haphazard but his actual musical learning seems to have commenced at the age of 18. When he took Upadesa from Sangita Swamy - An Andhra Sannyasi from Banares. Shama was a Devi Upasaka and he had the Darsan of Mataji-Kamakshi who inspired the rich musical compositions that came out of his heart. He initiated Tyagaraj and Muthusami into the cult of Parasakti.

Sangit Swamy led Shama Sastry into the mysteries of the higher aspects of music the intricacies of Raga and tala and presented him with some rare musical works on the mysteries of Gandharvam and advised him to listen to Pachimiriam Adeppayya. After the period of tutelage, Swamiji blessed the pupil and left for Benares. Shama Sastry improved his knowledge by his contact with Adeppayya and Pallavi Gopalayya. He was essentially a rasika, for he maintained amicable terms with his contemporaries. His life's mission was his unique devotion to Kamakshi Ammal to whom he dedicated all his compositions. A good looking man he loved good things of life and besides his absorbing passion for music and his love for the tutelary deity, he led the life of a normal 'grihasta'. As he was placed in affluent circumstances, he never made a living out of musical profession. He was considered by the villagers as the 'King of musicians'. His outlook to music had been different from Tyagayya and Dixitar. Tyagayya followed the Path of Bhakti Yoga, Dixitar used music as an aid to his intellectual perception of God. Whereas Shama used it in a pure and simple manner. He was a Mahapurusha who used to sing his songs on Friday - which are noted for their sweetness, originality, richness of conception and abun-

dance of feeling. Many of his Kirtan's brought on him the warmest encomiums and admiration of music scholars and uncompromising critics of his time. He used to pay occasional visits to Tyagayya. He composed a Navaratna Malika in praise of Madura Meenakshi Ammal. The famous Kriti सरोज दानेत्र in Sankarabharata is one of the nine gems.

AS A COMPOSER: His claim to be classed as one of the Trinity is based on the quality of his inspired compositions. His contribution to music is of the highest order. He is a scholarly composer in every sense of the term. He is a creative artist to a high degree whose pieces are distinctly original in all respects and exhibit an individual style from those of his illustrious contemporaries. His Sahityas are extremely simple and elegant. They may not possess the philosophic profundity of a Purandara, the erotic mysticism of a Kshetrajra, the Lyrical sweetness of a Tyagayya or the esoteric intellectualism of a Dixitar but they are replete with the natural pathos and tenderness of the new born babe.

In point of Sahitya, he stands next only to Kshetrappa. Indeed his compositions are marvels of Swara-Varna samyoga. His Varnamattus have a daring grandeur of conception. His magical skill lies in applying great rhythmic power to the compositions so that it may not impede the flow of melody. To sense the thrill of rhythm we have to go to his chaputala Kirtans.

The melodic form of his compositions, are strikingly original, unconventional and free. Being proficient in Telugu and Sanskrit, he composed nearly 300 pieces of which 20 Kirtans, 3 Swarajatis and one varna are available. His style is not so simple as Tyagayya's nor is it heavy and laborious like Dixitar's noted for an opportunity to elaborate Raga Prastara. From the point of Ragabhava, Tyagayya's Kirtis possess 'Drakshapaka' (Grape juice) Dixitar's 'Kadalipaka' (Plantain juice) Shamasastri's 'Nalikera' (cocoanut).

He chose the major well-known Ragas as mediums for his compositions. He composed many pieces in Anandbhairavi and each piece is an Alap by itself and has its own attractive form and setting. There is the facile flow of Sahitya and sangeeta which he blended in all his pieces which is not marred by the intricate tala he adapted. He delighted in introducing the atita and anagata complexities of rhythm. Being a specialist in Pallavi, he chose the less familiar tala chapu, in Vilambitkala which added a beautiful tempo and movement to his pieces. In fact the rhythmical excellence of his pieces has secured the admiration of Tyagayya. His genius is also exhibited in Apurva Ragas like Kalagada, Manji and Chintamani. His chintamani kriti Devi Brovasamaya was composed on the event of his contest with Bobbili Kesavayya in Tanjore. Another feature is the expression of the sentiment of introspection and confession of human frailties. He had implicit faith in God and completely surrendered himself. He shunned all the earthly wealth like his fellow musicians Tyagayya and Dixit and would not sing the praise of any ordinary mortal. He never cared for publicity and never travelled beyond Tanjore. His pieces in Apurva Ragas stand as monumental proofs of his rare originality. Raga swarupa is patent on the face of every piece. He chose Devistotra as the theme of his compositions. He had two sons Panja Sastri and Subraya Shastri. He passed away in 1827.

1803-62. SUBRAYA SASTRI,

the second son of Shama Shastri attained great scholarship in Tamil, Sanskrit, Telugu and music. He had the good fortune to be trained by his father and afterwards by Sri Tyagayya in music. He also came under the influence of the Marata musicians of Tanjore court. He composed a number of Kirtans and Swarajatis and signed his pieces with the signature 'Kumara.' His compositions are replete with Raga bhava and abound in beautiful Sangati and graceful technical appendages like the Madhamkala Sahitya, Swara Sahitya and Chittaswaras. His Kirtans

in rare Ragas are monumental proofs of his unusual genius for original compositions. He was also an expert fiddler. He gave publicity to his Kirtans at Meenaxi temple, Madura. He met Tyagayya, often recited his pieces before him and won his appreciation. He was intensely religious minded and was aware of his approaching death. He passed away in 1862 at Udayarpalam where the Zamindar who had a deep attachment for him paid Rupees Seven hundred to Annaswami Sastri's marriage. Most of his Kritis contain beautiful swara sahityas which considerably enhance the technical and musical excellence of the pieces. His disciples are (1) Annaswami Sastri, Kanchikasi Sastri, Chandragiri Rangachari, Sobhanari, Ponnusami, Tirujnana Moodali, Chimata Raghavuluchetti and Violinist Balu who were all accomplished musicians.

1827-1900: ANNASWAMI SASTRI,

(ALIAS SHAMA SASTRI),

was the adopted son of Subbaraya Sastri. He was given the name of his grandfather Shamsastri and also called 'Anna' by everybody. Under the able tutelage of his father Panju Sastri, he attained proficiency in Kavya, Nataka, Alankara, Vyakarana, and Sangita. He became an expert violinist also. He composed Tanavarnas, Kritis. His Kirtis in Kidar-gola and Sahana are popular pieces. The Swara Sahityas for Kirtans in Madhyamavati and Ananda Bhairavi are his own contributions. His autograph manuscripts on 72 Malakarta scheme and Raga Lakshanas are with his relatives. He was the bosom friend of Veena Kuppu Iyer. Melakara Govindan, tutor of Sarabha Sastri and Tanjore Kamakshi, the Guru of Veena Dhanam were two of his disciples. He left a son by name Shama, a good violinist and a painter of high order. He passed away in 1900. His disciples are (1) Pallavi expert Alasur Krishnayya of Mysore Durbar, (2) Perambur Krishnayya, Sangeeta Swamy and Pieper Dasari of outstanding fame who

got plaudits from the Apostle of Absolute music, Sri Tyagaraja.

RAMASWAMI DIXITAR (1735-1817): Tiruvarur is a glorious name among the numberless shrines that stud this blessed Tamilnad. Its renown goes back into the early Chola times when reigned there, the Manithi Kanda Chola, the king whose Dharma (righteousness) was such as to demand the life of his own son for the death of a poor calf. The town is presided by Rajamurthi and Nataramurthi of God Siva and Sri Tyagaraja, who has inspired the great Tevaram saints and drawn the hearts of the Nayanars. The shrine at Tiruvarur the greatest of the shrines near Tanjore is the favourite place of pilgrimage for Telugus, Tamils, Kanarese, Malayalis and Southern Maratha Vidwans. It is renowned for its culture. Great Pandits live in and around it and music and dancing flourishes by the grace of the Lord Tyagaraja Himself, the exponent of the dance called "Ajapanatana." Nageswaras and Natya are its special arts and who has not heard the name of Tiruvarur Jnanam, the last of the great exponents of dance. Thrice holy is Tiruvarur to the lover of music, for it is this small place that gave birth to the Carnatic music Trinity Tyagaraja, Shamasastri and Muthuswami. Of these Muthuswami stuck to this place for a long time.

His father Ramaswami Dixiter, the hero of this sketch, was a famous composer who is credited with having invented Raga Hamsathwani. Ramaswamy was a pious man who worshipped Muthukumara at Anantandavapuram and he was blessed with three sons. He learnt music at the feet of Muddu Venkata Mahi, Minister of the Tanjore Naik's court. He belongs to the Kasyapa Gotra, Apastamba Sutra and his parents Venkateswar Dixiter and Bhaqirathi Ammal were great devotees. In his seventh year he left for Govindapuram and learnt Sanskrit and Telugu. Afterwards he went to Tanjore and studied music under Veerabhadrayya. He learnt Veena and mastered the theory of music as expounded by Venkatamaki, under Venkata Vidyathath Dixit, a collateral descendant

of Venkatamaki. His talents were recognised by the Maharaj and was honoured till at last he permanently settled down at Tiruvarur. At the invitation of Manali Muthu Krishna Moodali, he went to Manali and was honoured by Venkata Krishna Mudali with Kanakabhisheka in appreciation of his composition of 108 Paga Tala Malika beginning with the Sahitya 'Natakadi Vidyala'. He was religious-minded and on every Ekadasi day, he used to sing all the 24 Ashtapadis of Jayadev. He has composed many Ragamalikas, Chowka and Tanavarnas with the signature "Venkata Krishna." He gave life, flesh and blood, and Swarupa to his newly created Raga Hamsadhvani. He died in 1817.

CHINNASWAMI DIXIT. The younger brother of Muthuswami, the great, was a great linguistic professor, Vainika and singer. He received several royal honours from Manali Moodali and other nobles. Once while he was making an Alap of Nagavarali before an assembly of Pandits, a big cobra appeared before him and spreading out its hood, began to dance. After the music ceased, the snake withdrew to its place of abode quietly. He sang many Kirtans of his brother at Madura. His Kirtan in Todi Raga in praise of "Narada Ganalola Karunalawala" is a well known composition. He died in his 45th year.

BALASWAMY DIXITAR (1786-1858 A.D.) attained great scholarship in Telugu, music and was a versatile genius. He gained remarkable proficiency in Vina. Swarabath, Violin, Sitar and Mridanga. Manali Moodali placed him under the tutelage of a European Violinist and he made a remarkable progress in English technique of Violin. He was also honoured by several Rajas. After the demise of his brother Muthuswami he went on a pilgrimage to Setu Rameswar and then came to Ettiyapuram. He became the court musician of Ettiyapur. He wrote many Kirtans. He passed away in 1858.

SUBBA RAMA DIXIT. (1839-1907.) The last of the race of the musical Titans and grandson of Balu

Dixit. His parents were Siva Ramayya and Annapurna. His elder brother Ranaswamy was a noted singer and Vainika and won high honours at the hands of the age but died in the 45th year. Subba Ram was born at Tiruvallur and was taken away by Balu Swami to Ettiyapur for musical training where he was taught instrumental and Vocal music. He also learnt the mysteries of music as laid down by Sarangdeva and elaborated by Venkata Makhi. At the age of 17, he composed Tanavarnas in Durbar Raga and sang it before a critical audience of amateur and professional Vidwans. Ettayppa Rama Venkateswar Maharaj gave him a test piece to be composed - a Jatiswara in Emankalyani; Raja Aditala Pallavi and Anupallavi consist of Swaras and the last stanza of four avertas should be in slow Madhya and drita tempo and again in the reverse order, technically known as Anuloma and Viloma. The boy ably managed to compose the pieces even long before the return of the Raja and sang it before audience. The Raja presented him a pair of shawls and 10 sovereigns as an incentive to his further effort. He composed a tanavarna in Ramapriya and a Kirtan in Sankarabharana in praise of H.H. Jagadguru Sankaracharya of Kamakotipeeta at Kumbakonam and before a distinguished gathering of grammarians and musicians, logicians and poets, as Veena Subbu Kutti, Ramadu Bhagavatar—who so-journed for a long time at Kashi, assimilated whatever was best in Hindustani music and brought with him to the south Geeta Govinda and set the 24 Astapadis to Karnatic Ragas and talas. His profound scholarship in Sanskrit and Telugu, mastery of the theory of Venkatmakhi's system of music made Subbu undertake the monumental work, S. S. Pradarshini in 3 volumes and it was at the instance of Jagadishwar Ettiyappan in 1897, he had completed his Maqam Qas - the dream of his heart. He had immortalised the labours of Venkatmakhi and of Dixiter. He left an indelible mark on Karnatic music by his numerous chanaka, Varna Tanavarna, Swarjati, Keertan, Daruvu, Ragamalika, Sancharis and tanams to the composi-

tions of V. Makhi and Dixitar. Scientific explanations and notes attached to the defining Sanskrit Stanzas that V. Makhi had composed for Raganga Ragas and and their Janyas. He was past the meridian of life but was hale and hearty, ripe and mellow, till death snatched him away. Of medium height and build, fair of complexion, he had the supreme mark of a great soul, the humility of a child, and infinite adaptation of himself to the level and calibre of his who engaged his time. A remarkable personality in all conscience, a great soul and a noble intellect. He was the last of the minstrels, the last of the Titans that held the lists against all comers. He immortalized himself and those that laboured in the field of music for 300 years. He wrote a Ragamala embodying the 72 Raganga of Ragas of Makhi. He died in 1907.

1775-1835. MUTHUSAMI DIXITER (SON OF RAMASWAMY DIXITER): Music in India, has from remote antiquity been developed to a high degree of perfection and the scientific knowledge of the subtle intricacies of its technique has been evolved with great precision. It has had a unique and long history from the days when the Vedic seers set to music their beautiful hymns in the simple sapta swaras, down to the period of the Chalukya and Karnatic kings of medieval India and later, the period of the renaissance of music under the Nayak and Bhonsle rulers of Tanjore to the present day, when we are the proud inheritors of the highly evolved schools of Hindustani and Karnatic music with its 72 Melakartas.

Among the illustrious roll of the masters of the art who have made their lasting contribution to the development and perfection of music stands the name of Muthusami as one of the foremost. This great and high souled person who has left the indelible impress of his personality on Indian culture and art, lived at a period in her history, when the lustre of her creative art had not yet dimmed and her cultural unity and supremacy had not been impaired

in spite of the fact that her political unity and autonomy had been entirely broken

He is one of the Trinity of Karnatic music, whose compositions form the stock-in-trade of all southern musicians. He came of a line of distinguished musicians amongst whom were the immortal Venkatamukhi and Govind Dixitar and his own father Ramaswami. He was born in 1775 as the fourth luminary in the line of Dixiter, at Tiruvarur, which gave birth to Tyagaya and Shama sastri. Muthusamy had a natural aptitude for sanscrit and music in which he attained thorough mastery. His compositions bear the marks of *Mantrasakti*, *Srividya*, *Vedanta*, etc. He was initiated into the cult of Devi upasana by his Guru Chidambaraswami. He accompanied him to Banares to promote his further studies in the atmosphere of profound scholarship and piety of that sacred city. During his long stay of 7 years, there he learnt the subtleties of Hindustani music which he used latter in his compositions with great effect and enriched Karnatic music. Traces of this are visible in his kirtans in Emankalyan and Brindavani Saranga. On his return back, he had been to Tiruttani and received the blessings of Subrahmanya Deva. The Deva had become his preceptor and each of his songs bears the signature "Guruguha". The first song which he broke out is मानस गुरुगृह in Ananda Bhiravi and 20 songs followed in quick succession. From Tiruttani, he went to Kanchi and learnt upanishads from Upanishad brahmam. He got inspiration from Kamakshi Ammal and composed two songs in Raga Manohari and Hindol. There is not a single saiva or Vaishnava shrine which he has not visited and immortalised in his songs. He also composed Kirtanas on Panchabhuta पंचभूता Devas, and Navagrahas. The Goddess Kamalamba at Tiruvarur was his favourite Deity and he composed 11 Navavarna kirtans. Other compositions are written on Nilotpalamba, Ganesh, Achaleswara, Anandeswar,

and Siddheswara, Rajagopal of Mannargudi. Ranganayaka and Meenakshi. He had been to the court of Ettiyapuram where he had received the patronage of the chief Venkateswar, a musician and composer. To prove that he is imbued with Spiritual powers — his Kriti Raga Arita Varshani is sufficient to prove that it has subsided the drought.

He possessed the necessary requisites for great music. He was a great Viragi, who disdained to sing the praises of mortal men with the same voice that sang of Omnipotent God. As was often the case with many scholars, chill-penury often repressed his noble rage and occasionally in his compositions we find a tone of melancholy. Vaidyalinga Moodr of Tiruvarur a wealthy noble had great appreciation for Dixiter, so that he asked Muthuswamy to compose a song in his praise. But Dixiter did not care to extol him but agreed to pay to Lord to shower His blessings upon him, in his Ragamalika consisting of 14 ragas. At times he had to suffer the stings of poverty. He sang a kirtan "Tyagaraj Bhajo" in yadukuia Kambhoji and he got the full supply of provisions the next morning. Once he visited Kivalur to pay his respects to the Lord but the priest, discourteously bolted the door of the sanctuary upon Dixitar's face. Sorrow Stricken, the devotee Muthuswamy sang the tune Akshayalinga Vibho in Sanrarabharan Raga as if in keeping with the time measure of the piece, there broke-out a sound and the locked gates have burst open. The last six years of Dixiter's life was spent happily at Ettiyapuram under the warm patronage of the Raja. As he had no issues, he adopted his grandson Subba Rama Dixiter, the publisher of Sampradaya Pradarsini.

Like a true scholar, Deekshitar scorned delights and lived laborious days. By arduous training, and discipleship he added to his remarkable gifts, profundity of learning, wide culture and intense spirituality. He was more than well equipped for the great

task of exercising his wonderful powers of creative art. For he was not merely a musician skilled in the art but also a scholar of varied learning and tastes. The unique spectacle of enthralling music dedicated to the service of God, applied to the quest for spirituality, quite in contrast to the picture of the great muse, forced in the company of light hearted revellers is seen in him. It is common to find in the pages of Hagiology, the accounts of the lives of many great masters of creative art, reference to the miracles that they derived in-spiration for their great task from Visions of the unseen reality. So it was with Dixiter. Even to the sceptical mind, this traditional account embodies the truth that all true creative art is inspired and parties of the nature of the creator of the Universe. In spite of the self-imposed restriction-the Gurugaha Mudra on the free flow of his poetic genius. Dixit so much succeeded in exhibiting true literary excellence; he imposed that the names of Ragas in which every composition is sung must find a place in it. He has made the unpromising material of the raga names yield aesthetic grace. There are rare ragas like Paraj, Mahuri, Arabhi which he has used in a literary piece without harming the effect of the literary merit of the compositions. All his Kirtans are in the style of Kshetrajna and his compositions are in the nature of hymns in praise of Gods and Goddesses of the Hindu Pantheon and the literary form has necessarily to be suited to the invocatory style usually adopted in such compositions.

To strike the true note of poetic art when it is hedged in by these forms and conventions is a great achievement and it must be agreed on all hands that Dixitor had exhibited marvellous gifts of genius and attained remarkable success.

The slow measured cadences of his compositions exhibiting in all their variety, fulness and beauty, the Ragas chosen for them, the perfect harmony

of the Bhava, Raga and Tala, the symphonic attunement of the words to the Swarasthanas, the lift of the verses and the resonance of particular letter sounds when noted with the nuances of the Raga and the harmonious combination of the Raga with the words subtly indicative of the emotions or Rasas underlying them makes his compositions masterpieces of soul-stirring melody. Now are they devoid of literary grace, poetic suggestion and depth of meaning.

Dixitor had at his command, the entire body of an ancient culture. Music and devotion were in his blood and he prepared himself for his life's work as conscientiously as Milton had done; but unlike the English Poet, nothing could sour the unvarying of sweetness of his disposition. If he passed through any strong emotional crisis, any spiritual storm and stress, it has left no trace in his compositions. There it is all serenity and poise. His music makes its greatest appeal to the contemplative element in us and its prime virtue lies in strengthening that tendency.

The subject of his composition seems at first sight narrow, and the treatment almost pedestrian. Every song is a hymn of praise the ineffable bliss of the incomparable Ekeswara, the Infinite Mercy of the Sagunabrahma. He is no sectarian. His catholicity is however, not a cloak of indifference; it is the outcome of true spiritual realisation. He who has apprehended the one in the many, delights in every one of its holy manifestations. His language as befits his theme, is spare and austere. It reflects his deep intimacy with the Mantra and Yoga Shastras. While utilising to the full all the musical resources and metrical devices of language, he does not aim at reproducing the complex and specific rhythms of poetry, where musical effect demands it, he does not hesitate to sacrifice literary elegance. This rudder of verses is rhyme with which they steer their courses like stars, may be applied to his conception of the Sahitya in its strictly utilitarian aspect. It is

not an end in itself. It is merely the indispensable framework of the music.

The purpose of a serious composer is to make visible the lineaments of truth. He had stuck up to conventional themes and pared down words to their melodic essence. His "Balagopala" reads like a poetic summary of Krishna's life.

Music and poetry awaken response from different centres of consciousness. Poetic emotion, the product of the poetic imagination is something different from musical emotion, the emanation of the musical imagination. The rasas allied to poetry also describe the varieties of musical emotion. It is always profitable to work for the characteristic Bhava of a Raga. Bhava transcends the classification of emotional categories rather than mere literary descriptions in terms of Rasa could hope to do. The Ragabhava is the constant ground-swell, while the Rasas are the billows on the surface of the sea. Just as and ground-swell go together to form the mighty symphony of the sea, so the specific Rasa evoked by the words of the Sahitya and Bhava of the Raga combine to form a perfect whole in the musical compositions of great masters.

All art has a common goal, a kind of Brahmaloaka, beyond their special worlds where they are reconciled and made one. Our poets, singers, and artists know that the goal could be grasped only in a state of heightened awareness. Some attained it through Bhakti, others through Dhyana and some others through Dharana. धर्मेनवेद्यितवति is Valmiki's poetic process.

Dixitar's way was the way of Dhyana. The key to the mode of his compositions is found in a sculptor's work. The Iconographer too must be an expert in Dhyana Yoga. By the act of Dhyana, the artist contacts the supreme mundane levels of reverences from

which all art-forms are derived. All music is an earthly representation of the music that there is in the rhythm of the ideal realm. If those unheard melodies are to be brought down to mortal ears, the artist has to employ the golden stairway of words and Dixitar, an ardent Upasak of Sri Vidya वाक्मात्र का वर्णरूपिणी—relied on the incantational power of the word, rather than on its intellectual or emotional content. His sahityas are thus in effect, "Dhyan Slokas" rather than lyrics. They start a train of vibrations which finds its consummation in the wordless ecstasy of the melody.

Musical taste should be widely diffused by the reverent study and the constant practice of the highest types of music enshrined in the works of the great composers, hence a reverent study and meditation on the Sahitya of Dixitar is quite indispensable for those who want to understand the perfect blend of words with music in his varnametus. Music has its own independent language in its combination of notes. (Swara Samuha) and it is the language that stirs the musical emotions rather than wordy literature (Pada sahitya) Dixitar has no antipathy to Telugu or Tamil.

Above all Dixitar was the inheritor of the stores of knowledge and experience which the Indian mystics had gained in exploring the possibilities of sound effect on the nerve centres of the human metabolism and on mental psychology and the consequent generation of spiritual energy. He was deeply imbued with the hoary tradition beginning from Vedic times which believed in the mysterious efficacy of the collection of sounds and loved to worship God as mother and to meditate on the unseen reality behind the universe, with the aid of the sound of the symbol OM! Indian saints have always regarded the harmony of music, as a powerful aid to Yogic concentration

of mind. Hence Dixitar soaked in their traditional lore, and composed his musical hymns in the true spirit of reverential meditation.

The greatness of Karnatic music is rightly affirmed to consist in the concept of its Ragas. Amongst the great composers, Dixitor stands supreme for the richness of Ragabhava. He has written 300 pieces in Sanskrit and a few in Telugu, Tamil and Manipravalam. He also composed Tana Varnas, Ragamalikas, Lakshana-gētas in rare Ragas. He wrote Kritis useful for novices down to an expert which even experts hesitate to sing. His Kritis are rich in Gāmak and show great musical scholarship. Each major Kirtan can be considered a treatise on the raga and while others confined themselves to the Adi, Rūpak, Chapu and Japtal, he employed great variety of Talas by utilising Ata, Mathya, Dhruva, as also Tisra, chatusra, and Khandajati of Ekatal. His compositions need a great sustaining power and musical skill on the part of the artist with deep breath; hence it is in this age which delights in quick flashing and easily running music are not quite popular. The slow stately movement of his Kritis call up before the mind the image of the huge and majestic car of Tyagaraj at Tiruvadi, the glory of which is sung in the well-known old saying "Tiruvarur Theru Azhahy."

His style is grand and majestic and is the offspring of intellectual loftiness. His pieces are long and have deservedly become classics. He had few pieces which can appeal to men of musical scholarship and competent judges of high class music. His Kirtans are replete with Ragabhava and are in Vilambitkala. The rare feature of his Kriti is that the Dhatu is rarely repeated. He was a Vainika and vocalist too.

He had a bass voice and healthy body, the former gave a solemn sonorousness to his music and with the latter he could easily handle his long drawn deep and swaying music. His songs breathe through out the spirit of joy and utter self-abnegation. They conjure

before our minds the picture of a man lost in his own song. Unmindful of his own comforts and desires—a man of faith—with a light in his eye, a song in his heart and a supernatural lustre in his face. By his work and life, he proves the truth of the saying, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth". The world in the end; belongs to the unworldly. So long as music is here on this earth, to give joy to humanity, the name of Dixitar will be cherished with reverence and admiration. The passing away of Muthusami Dixitar was one of the most grave and impressive scenes in the history of music. The state elephant of the Ettayapur Raja turned mad and went to the cremation ground which forbode the death of Dixitar. Dixitar sat in the company of his students and asked them to sing his kriti, Meenaxi He Mudam गमनक्रिय Raga and when the disciples were singing the anupallavi "Meenalochani Pasa Mochani" he felt the Goddess had really released him from earthly bondage and he passed away.

His disciples are T. Bharata, Veena Venkatramana, T. subrahmanyam, Kornada Ramaswami, Belwavanam, Mridangam Tambiyappa, Vaaivelu. Ponnayya, Chinayya, Tiruvarur Kamalam and Ammani dancers.

Note: The family of Ramaswamy Dixit, migrated from Northern circars and bears its stamp in the 'cognomen' Andhra Venkateswar Dixit and wife due to the terrible raids of Haider Ali's bands, were forced to leave their home near Kanchi. They betook themselves after long wanderings to the Holy shrine of Madhyarjuna blessed by the presence of Sri Mahalinga. He spent his boyhood in the Holy Ashram in the company of the best and purest men. Vedic studies occupied all his time. He cultivated Sanskrit and Telugu in his leisure hours. His rare voice of wonderful volume, flexibility and sweetness attracted the attention and charmed the hearts of music lovers.

TITLE

DIXITAR'S SCHOOL

SATTANUR PANJU IYER : Strove to Popularise Dixitar's Kirtans with a powerful voice and unerring Swarajnana, he rendered them with perfect and impressive articulation. He won great fame as an expert in Madhama Kala pieces. He popularised several of Dixitar's kirtans in rare Ragas. He enjoyed the patronage of art-lovers of Madras. Veena Dhanam hailed him as her Guru and always spoke of him with great respect and acknowledged him as the last of Tana and Neraval experts. His kirtans are now with his son Mahadev Iyer, a leading musical luminary of Madras.

RAMACHANDRA BHAGAVATAR OF DIXIT'S SCHOOL. The mantle of Subba Rama Dixit, author of Sangeeth Sampradaya Pradarsini fell on Ramachandra, who had already inherited tradition of the Dixit's school for his father. He turned his attention to Tyagaraja kirtans and acquired a prodigious repertoire of them. Already a repository of Chowka varnas, Tana Varnas, Raga Malikas, he quickly made his mark as a singer of eminence, and revelled in singing tough and intricate Pallavis often improvised extempore in rare and unfamiliar Ragas. The spacious music halls and the applause of listening crowds had no lure for him, despite his tremendous resource and equipment. He gave concerts with the accompaniments of Krishna Iyer and Tukaram Appa (drum). He spared no pains in coaching up a band of youths like *Pushpavanam* of ever green fame and unfading glory was his protege, not to speak of other *Simizhi Sundaram Iyer* and violin *Govindaswamy*. The Trikala manipulation of Pallavi was his creation. His sense of laya and melody, profound imagination and the panorama of Swara

Sancharas that he could conjure up, deserved no small need of praise. His son Rajagopal, has been a familiar figure in Madras Music circles

SIMZHI SUNDARAM IYER: a disciple of E. Ramchandra Bhagavatar and Maha Vaidhi. He was proficient in Raga Alap, Swara Prastarana, Dixitar's kirtans, theory of music, and other requisites qualifying him to make his mark on the platform as a professional musician. He commanded the respect of the contemporary musicians and connoisseurs. His chief disciple is Mudikondan

VINA KUPPAYYA was a Tamil Brahmin of the Vadama sect. and Sama Vedi, son of Veena Samba Sastri, a violinist, Vainika and composer he earned the title of "*Ganachakravarti*". His son Tyagayya (Tiruvalur) published Sankirtan Ratnavali and Pallavi Swara kalpavalli—a great Lakshan Vidwan and author of several Varnas and Kirtans bearing the mudra of "Gopala Dasa".

ANAYYA: was a great musician, linguist and composer. He was the Asthana Vidwan of Sarabhoji Raja. His Tamil and Telugu Kirtans bear the stamp of "*Umadasa*". He had a brother named Aiya-whose disciple was Maha Vaidhi.

PALLAVI GOPALAYYA pupil of Pachimiriam Adappayya, and Asthana Vidwan of Amarsingh and Sarabhoji Rajas (1788-1832). He composed several kirtans with the stamp of "*Venkata*."

GHANAM KRISHNA IYER: Son of Ramaswami Iyer musician of Tanjore palace. Krishna Iyer was a composer of Tamil Padas. He was a disciple of Bobbli Kesavayya. He wrote many Padas in praise of zamindar "*Yuba Ranga Bhupa*"

SRINIVASA: Minakshi Devi Temple priest. Madura. He wrote many kirtans bearing the stamp

of *Vijaya Gopal*", a contemporary of Raja Vijaya Ranga Chokka.

VAIDESWARANKOVIL SUBBA RAMA Author of several beautiful Tamil padas which bear the Mudra-Mudukumara.

MUTHU TANDAVAR AND MARIMUTHU PILLAI: wrote kirtans in praise of Nataraj of Chidambaram,

PAPA VINASA MOODR. (18th cent) composed many kirtans bearing the mudra of his name.

Achuta Dasar, Muthukrishna Pulavar, Kadigai Namasivaya Pulavar, Mooku, Mambazha Kavirayar, Madura Kavi, Vedanayakam Pillai, Tiruvarur Subramanya Iyer author of *S. Koumudi* were all Tamil composers.

Kamas Madhava Rao, Sarangi Naidu, Swarubat Krishnayya, are some of the instrumental players of N. Indian type.

1752-1816 PALLAVI DURAISWAMI IYER. *A Court Musician of Tanjore Durbar* composed 4 Telugu kirtans. He was the grandson of Narayan Venkata Subbu Iyer, Veena player of Tanjore court and the contemporary of Tyagaraja. He was brought up by his maternal grand-father in his early life who afterwards settled down in Madras. He had remarkable poetic expression in Telugu language. His younger brother was adopted by Subbu Iyer. Vidwan Sabesh Iyer, the composer's great grandson was the first Principal of the Annamali University. The texts of his songs were obtained from the illustrated MSS of the composer who was also a painter. He composed in all 49 pieces. He met the famous Bobbili Keshvayya and won him in a test of Pallavi singing.

T. SABESA IYER (1872-1948)

was the great grandson of Pallavi Doraswamy, who was a vaggeyakar and vainika of Tanjore court.

His paternal grandfather and grand uncle Sabhapati and Govindasami Sivan were pupils of Tyagaraja. He spent his boy-hood in Agaramanqudi village and shifted later to Tiruvayyar with his father Sambasiva Iyer, Violine accompanist to Mahavaidhi. Sabesan was one of the three noted pupils of Maha Vaidi Iyer and the other two being Pazmaneri Swaminathan and Umayalpuram Swaminathan. His earliest disciple was late Muttayya Bhagavatar for 4 years, from 1893, after the demise of his earliest guru Sumbasiva Iyer, came to Madras and his latest disciple is Musiri Subrahmanyam from 1920-29. He was indeed a pattern of a real guru who gave all his knowledge to his pupils. He exercised personal attention to deserving pupils and taught Maha vaidhi's Mela Ragamala. His vocal rendering of many classics were full of grace and grandeur. Palladam and Karur Chinna swamy were his great admirers. He was also a violinist. He accompanied Sarabhasatri the Flutist. He was the first Principal of the Anamaliar College (1929-37) He was easily the most efficient teacher among senior Vidwans. He acted as the President of the Music Academy in 1934. His disciples are T/K. Ranagachari, Sattur Subrahmanya Iyer and Veena Vidwan K.S. Narayan Iyengar. His sincerity in the practice of his art soon won recognition for his talent, and though is middle-aged he established for himself the highest reputation. No artist of to-day can sing the highest notes so easily and melodiously like him. Apart from perfect technique, he took pains to study the meaning of every song he rendered. This accounts for the expert interpretation of the emotion of the song unrivalled by any other musician. His voice is the chief source of his attraction. It is rich, melodic, sharp, high-pitched and feminine type.

In the matter of pliability and expressiveness there is nothing to explain. It gets an added charm in the thick and thin of shades that he lends to it, a rare feature with professionals. Its range and pitch

are comparatively high and it brings down the cheers of the audience. He has a good stock-in-trade in the matter of various compositions. He does not move in hackneyed grooves without varied manodharma. There is a conscious lay out of elaborate plans are play of variegated imagery in all that he sing-curves and graces he has in plenty and some of them are well stressed in a characteristic way. He handles both Vilambat and mydyama kala pieces in their natural mode without any insecure over-speedy or unnatural drift in time or treatment. He is one of them who sang a good number of Dixitar's kirtans, with ease.

Anachi Iyer. (1798-1832) Court musician of Sarfoji's durbar and an expert in Veena and vocal.

Manatattam Doraswami. (1865-1926) son of Vaidyanatha Iyer and a disciple of Nagavaram Nilakanta Iyer.

Muzhavarayanendal Subrahmanya Bhagavater. (1888 A.D.) Son of the famous Tamil scholar and belongs to a line of musicians and composers on mother's side, his maternal grand-father being M. Chidambara Bhagavatar, composer of Arupattimuvar Charitra in Kirtan form and Perumba Kirtan. He was honoured at Mysore and Travancore courts, for his wonderful Swara improvisation. He presided over Madras Music Academy in 1942. A. D.

Tandav Pandit Bharatam Nallur Narayanaswamy (1872) Native of Andarnallur Sanjore Dt, son of Subrahmanya Iyer. And a direct disciple of Merattur Venkatrama Sastry. He learnt Music from Umayalpuram Krishna Bhagavatar, a disciple of Tyagayya. He took leading part in the dance-dramas of the Bhagavata Mela—Sampradaya and taught Bharatam to many. Equipped with knowledge in Telugu and Sanskrit, he had specialised in Tala and Natya Lakshana and is a store of rare Movvagopala Padas. He was honoured by H/H. Sankaracharya of Kamakotipeeta with the title of 'Tandava pandit. He

is the sole sermonist and surviving member of the Tanjore Bhagavata Natya Sampradaya in its authentic form.

Adimurtyya son of Pallavi Gopalayya, Asthan Vidwan of Tanjore in the time of Sarabhoji (1824-65) and an eminent Vainika.

Adi Narayanadass. A descendant of Bhadrachala Ramadass who composed a number of devotional songs

Adiyarkanallur. A noted commentator on Silappadikaram who throw light on music portion of the Tamil Epic poem. He was well-versed in Lakshana.

Ambiyaram. Noted violinist P. Gurumurti Sastri impressed by his extra-ordinary proficiency conferred on him the title of 'Singakutti'. His eldest son Appakutti was an expert violinist.

Ananta Bharati. (1845-1905) author of Bhagavata Dasama Skandha Kirtanas and Desika Prabhava Prakasika etc.

Saint Aneyya Nayanar. One of the 63 canonised saivite saints of South India. He was a great flute expert, and when he played the flute the animate and the inanimate objects stood motionless listened to his music with rapt attention.

Palghat Anantarama Bhagavatar. (1867-1991) Son of a Puranik, Krishna sastri, was born in village, Tondikulam in Palghat. Early in life, he showed talents, for music studied music under Mahadeva Bhagavatar of Nurani for 7 years. He stayed in Trivadi for 2 years and while there tried to listen to Mahavaidyanathan. He stayed in Madras for 12 years and during this period cultivated the acquaintance of the renowned Harikatha performer Pandit Lakshna Chari and became proficient in the art of Kalakshepas. He was invited to give concerts in many places. He was appointed, Samathan Vidwan in Mysore in the time of Krishnaraja Wadyar. He spent his last days in Kalpati. He was endowed with an impressive and

melodious voice which had good stamina. The voice maintained its easy responsive quality, right through his concerts. In his performances, one heard all the subtleties and excellences of vocal music. He was a tall person, and possessed a commanding personality, and fair complexion. It is a delight to hear to his renderings of Mudritam and other graces characteristic of vocal music. He was held in high esteem by the vidwans of his time.

K.E. Karai Muthu Iyer. Resident of Tiruvayyar well-known custodian of Dixitar's compositions. He possessed a sweet voice and presented pieces in the old orthodox and traditional style Veena Dhanam learnt 'Akshayalinga Vibho in Sankarabharana Raga from him, noted for its matchless rendering.

Mysore Krishna Iyengar. He spent his time mostly in Tanjore District. He had a voice that could compass any speed with the incredible facility and Swara Kalpana was his forte. Begada, Durbar and Kanada were his favourite Ragas. As he was not after money and publicity he never stirred out. He was very genial, hearty and had a large circle of friends and admirers.

Biksandar Koil Subrayar. One of the most outstanding figures in Karnatic music, in the last century. Great Vidwans like Vasudev Iyengar make him out a remarkable personality, great in head and heart. He lived just before the time of the famous trio, (1) Mahavaidhi, (2) Kannakudi Krishnan, (3) Patnam Sabramanyam and was the contemporary of Andanallur Subbu Iyer.

Born in affluent circumstances, he was able to steer the wheel of fame and fortune with courage and confidence. He moved about in a palanquin of his own. He sang only when he felt the spontaneous urge from within and not otherwise, so his friends and admirers waited for any length of time for his moment of inspiration. A potentate who was unaware of this once expressed a desire to hear him and conveyed the message to him through his patron-

K B Iyengar but a curt reply came. Being aware of Subrayar's mood, some of them awaited his pleasure. Such was the esteem Subrayar enjoyed that the two persons waited for over a month and then he took themselves to his residence to enjoy the glorious music. In point of sweetness of voice he was considered far superior to Mahavaidhi. He was at home in Tristhayi and preserved with immense care and attention, the réach, majesty and melody of his supreme voice to the very end of his life. He covered not only a few Kriti in the course of a performance and Tyagaraj had not come yet to occupy, pride of place in music Sabhas. It was usual in those days for eminent musicians to elaborate Ragas for 2 to 3 hours and the audience brought up in wholesome traditions and holding Vidwans in veneration, never exhibited lack of appreciation or restlessness. The prevailing atmosphere then was one of leisure and ease, quite unlike modern times when the key-note of almost every activity is hurry and breathless speed.

The Zamindar of Tiruvadamuradur had a strong desire to hear Subrayar at his residence. Therefore he persuaded the musician to come to his palace where he treated him with good respect for over 2 months. But no mood came to the musician, hence Subbu felt the situation galling. He tried his utmost but failed to find even his voice, not to speak of the emotional upsurge for musical expression. So one might be trudging along the road silently. After a wearisome journey, he slacked his thirst in a pool near by and sat down for a spell of rest. He meditated over recent happenings and casually he took up Raga Devagandhari. The melody came swinging and echoed in the solemn stillness of the dead of night. This voice was in perfect form and his imagination bodied forth like a torrential flood. Sweeping everything before it in a transport of ecstasy, he exclaimed that he had to scatter his wealth of Nada in desolate wilderness at midnight. The Zemindar who

appraised of Subba's departure followed him post-haste and met him there. The two returned back to Tiruvadamardoor, where the concert was continued till early hours of the dawn. Those were good golden days when talents enjoyed such fulsome and ungrudging patronage in the blessed land of the Cholas!

Kandrakudi Krishna Iyer. The latter half of the 19th century witnessed the brilliant trio in Karnatic music, Mahavaidhi, Patnam, and Krishna Iyer. Both in point of musical learning and reputation, the last named was on a par with the other two. Krishna Iyer was the Asthan Gayak of Ramnad for many years. He held this position with great dignity. He was profusely honoured by both Muddu Setupati and Bhaskar Setupati. He composed a number of Chowka varnas and dedicated them to the latter. His Sankarabharana Padavarna has become a classic which was performed by the disciples of Vadivelu of Tanjore in the august assembly of Pandits like Poochi Iyengar, Varadachar B A. Govindaswami (violin) and it was a veritable feast to witness. He had also a flair for composing Pallavis in rare Talas. Once in Ramnad, before an assembly of Pandits he composed an extempore Pallavi in 64 Matras and challenged Maha Vaidhi-the author of 72 Melakarta Raga Mala. Thus he contested many Vidwans by throwing before them intricate Pallavis. This was his past time to drag even patented musicians into contests and place them in a ridiculous position. Hence he was known as 'Tigibigiratta pallavi' Krishna Iyer complex Pallavis with dexterously embroidered patterns of rhythmical designs have been occasionally flung over turbulent opponents as powerful weapons to humiliate their pride. He was the first person to suggest the possibility of a Raga Mala frame work in Pallavi, interwoven with the text of Sahitya to give an intelligent meaning. He had a rich voice like that of Patram and also sung like him with Sthayi Sruti. Other luminaries of his time are Sabhapati, Ambi and Rajan Bhagavatars.....

CHAPTER VI

Mahavaidya Nath Iyer

Mahavaidya Nath Iyer (1844-93) After the time of Pallavi Gopala Iyer Veena Perumallayya and Chokum, Seenu all of Tanjore—the greatest personality in the field of Karnatic music was Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer. He was a scholar, musician, composer and Katha performer all combined in one. He had an extraordinarily gifted voice and people who heard his concerts have unanimously vouchsafed that it was Gandharva Sareera. In his meteoric rise to fame and glory very early in life, he can be compared to the European composer Mozart. He was born in 1844 at Vaigacheri, to Doraswami Iyer who belonged to Brahacharanam sect Brahmin and Koundinya Gotra. He inherited music both from the paternal and maternal side. His mother was a descendant of Anai and Ayya famous musicians and composer in Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu. Doraiswamy initiated him into music along with Ramaswami Sivan who was an inseparable companion to him all through his life. He was entrusted to M. Venkatasubba Iyer, Guru of Patnam Subba Iyer. He acquired the ability to sing Raga and Pallavi in his seventh year with a wonderful voice easily reaching 3 octaves and speaking distinctly in a time-measure in which others cannot even blabber. From his ninth year he began to study the theory of music and became familiar with the literature on the subject. As he could sing easily in Shatkala and in the range of 3 octaves. He attracted the attention many senior Vidwans and patrons of music. In his 10th year he visited the courts of Pudukotta, Ettiyapur and Ramnad and made his mark as a musician before the celebrated Veena Subbakutti and Subbayar and Subba Rama Dikshitar and received many honours. Afterwards he visited Trinneveli, Tiruchandur and Sakkampatti. The

Thiruvaduturai Matt Pontiffs have always been great patrons to learning and art, and music. A music contest took place between Maha Vaidhi and China Vaidhi and Perizavaidi Brothers of Sivaganga. At this Mutt (Pandara Sannathi in whom the genuine Saivite fervour of Maha Vaidhi struck a sympathetic chord and who succumbed to the magic of his voice was the person who bestowed the title of Maha on Vaidyanathan of Vaiyachari—a title responsible for the impression that the recipient was head and shoulders above his brother-artists and that there was none else who deserved such a title during his time before or since. Astavadhani Valu Iyer explains the cause of the title Maha thus. Once in the Satyaloka, Brahma felt that where—as the other two members of the Holy Trinity had the prefix 'Maha' to their names. Mahadeva and Maha Vishnu, alone were not in that privileged position. The Lord of the universe getting scent of this, decided that Brahma should be enabled to realise his ambition. He therefore caused him to be born as a "Maha Vaidyanath" in this world. The Public received this ingenious explanation with approbation on the occasion of Maha-vaidhis "Splendid concert at Karaikal in the presence of Vembathur Pichu Iyer—an incarnation of Kavi Kalamegh and Chinnaasami Bharati.

During the Saptastana festival at Tiruvadi he engaged a huge crowd of 20 000 people in combination with Sambasivam and Tukaram Appa. Gifted with a voice unparalleled for its beauty and grandeur, he made a Rag Alap in Kalyan and sang Pallavi, "Taraka a Brahma Swarupa." Avoiding more euphonious phrases like Tading, Tadana he sang the Raga in the true Karnatic style. The polished rendering of his Kirtans, the lustre of his Alap (Raga) and the sparkling beauty of his Pallavi left a deep impression on the Public mind. He gave another concert in the house of Mayavaram Veena Vaidyanathan in the presence of Vidwans, Talainagar Sonu,

Chidambaram Krishnan and Visallur Girisan, and sang Saveri Raga in a thrilling style. He took up the Pallavi in a very quick tempo in three degrees of speed and developed Kalpana Swaras and the fleeting characters of the sound impressions of which baffled all the efforts at analysis of the listening Vidwans. They were all literally immersed in the Ocean of Saveri and ever since, Saveri came to be known as 'Sivanval Mayavaram Saveri'. Once the Zemindars arranged his concert on the banks of the Vennar at 6.P.M. not knowing the rigid orthodox principles of Sivani. But Sivan attached too much importance to his evening Sandhyavandana. After finishing his prayers only he attended the concert at 7.P.M. and feasted the ears of the listeners. He was also honoured profusely by the Rajas of Mysore, Travancore, Venkatagiri and Ramanad. Bhaskar Setu Pati of Ramanad once had a great desire to hear Maha Vaidhi. Patnam and Kanna Kudi Krishna Iyer on the same platform. He accordingly arranged the concert. The ball was set in motion by Mahavaidhi with a dazzling exposition of Todi Raga. The other two Vidwans responded to his Alap in their turn with equal excellence and ended with the Pallavi in Ganalola Karunalawala. The music of these three shining stars was veritably an aural feast and one fit for celestials to hear and enjoy. On special request Maha Vidhi composed a piece "Gowri Nayaka" in Kanada in Sinhanandana Tal, and sang in praise of Raja Rajeswari to the delight of all.

Maha Vaidhi started his musical concert with the 'Pundarikam' "Namah Parvati Pataye" and concluded it likewise, the principle being that the concert was an offering to the Deity Siva. The enviable position that Sivanval occupied in the realm of music, was also due to the blessings of Sundara Swamiji. He was free from all ugly mannerisms. He always put on a pleasant face and sang. The fact that the Vibhooti on his forehead did not get

obliterated by sweat is a clear proof of the fact that he was able to give soul-stirring music without any strain. He took extraordinary care to maintain the grandeur and lustre of his voice. Realising the importance of Divine Grace, he performed Pujas with great devotion and performed Abhishekas with honey and milk. He was also very careful about his diet. Mahavaidhi and Patnam lived in houses near the eastern and western gates of the Pranatarthihara swami temple at Trivadi. He always respected the elders and readily obliged them with his music forsaking all formalities. his devotion towards his elder brother is worthy of equal attention. He never touched the fees with his own hands. He had an unparalleled musical career. He also composed some pieces. Posterity will ever remember him as the author of the monumental composition the 72 Melakarta Ragamala. He was a prodigy and he brought some unique gifts to bear on his musical art.

Ramaswami Sivan could not help seeing a victory as he believed in his younger brother Vaidhi, was some kind of musical warrior predestined to win in every musical Joust and tournament and he could not think of music, except in terms of the battle. If Maha Vaidhi went forth to sing, it was in fulfilment of the Digvijaya. Maha Vaidhi in his reciprocal devotion to the elder brother at least tolerated, if he did not encouraged it.

It was an age of high musical achievement, The standard of Bikshandar Koil Subrayar noted for the inimitable exposition of Sahana was still fresh in men's memory and M.Vaidhi, out of respect to him, would not sing it. Men like China and Periya Vaidhi of Sivagana, Patnam Subrahmanyam, Kannakudi Coimbatore Raghava Iyer, were redoubtable musicians of proven and substantial merit beyond cavil and victories over these musicians were neither easy nor possible. Among his compeers, Vaidhis' was the most gifted voice and that few could sing

to his pitch or emulate him in speedy execution or re-duplicate the festoons of clustered Swaras and the highly ornate expression, that this voice predisposed him to. Neither could Maha Vaidhi reproduce the neat arabesques of Peria Vaidhis' Pallavi in fourth diminution, nor imitate the intricate patterns of China Vaidhi, nor recapture the rich epic style of Raghav Iyer, nor the sophisticated elaboration of Patnam. In addition to this eminence in music, Vaidhi was also an erudite scholar in Tamil and Sanskrit and he wrote two Kalakhepas Parvati Kalyna' and Prahalad Chartira and performed them before Tyagaraj Sastri (Tiruvelangad) Sattanur Panju and Gopala Krishma Bharati and Pallavi Sivaraman. He was a devotee of Siva and he studied the Tamil and Sanskrit works on Saivism.

A magnificent personality, gifted with a silvery voice, and devotion to Lord Siva, moral purity, and determination not to touch money. The rare quality of easy accessibility to all and reverence for elders are the factors that contributed to his immortal fame. It can be positively stated that no other musician has had a sweet voice like him or equalled him in the depth of musical learning, whether such a musician will ever be born is a matter of doubt!

PALAMANERI SWAMINATH IYER (1870-1942)
One of the foremost disciples of Maha Vaidyanath, was a profound Sanskrit Scholar, and publisher of Raga Vibodha. He was a Voco Violinist in whom traces of his Master are visible while singing Pallavi and Swara prastar. He had a high pitched voice which blended well enough with the violin, played by him. His was a prodigious repertoire of Dixiter, Tyagaraj, Kshatrijna and a host of others. His execution of 72 Mela Raga malika—the magnum opus was a rare and sumptuous treat. His delightful rallies in the broad and expansive realm of Solfa extempore were remarkable for originality and great creative intuition. He presided over the conference of the

Music Academy in 1931 and gave a valuable manuscript to Semmangudi for publication.

K. RAMACHANDRAN (1860-1925 A.D.) DISCIPLE OF MAHA VAIDYANATHAN Of the musicians, who succeeded Maha Vaidhi, the name of Kivalur Ramachandran deserves to stand foremost. He was in fact a musician of musicians. His name was well-cherished, by all the great Vidwans of today. Gifted as he was with a keen aesthetic sense and insight into the artifices of the art, disquisitions on the soul of the various Ragas and his incisive criticism of hidden faults have been very valuable to his fellow-artistes. He was the custodian of the faultless style of Dixitar's School which he drank in through the sweet Nagaswaram of Kandam of Kivalur, a Veena and Nagaswar Vidwan, and the perfectly malleable style of Tyagaraja which he mastered at the feet of Maha Vaidhi. He was not the formal pupil of either Kandan or Vaidhi, but in his early life, he could be seen in all the performances of both these artistes, exchanging understanding looks with them.

He was born at Kivalur, sanctified by Sri Akshaya Linga Swami, nine miles off Trivadi. It was already fragrant with the music of Dixitar and had produced the famous Kandan. He inherited the gift of music from his father, who was a dramatic singer. He passed Matriculation and worked as a teacher. Gifted as he was with a fine silvery feminine voice which could easily reach the higher pitches, he was welcomed everywhere as the heir-apparent of Maha Vaidhi. Even Maha Vaidhi was charmed by the sweetness of his voice and blessed him. The famous Dholak Nannu Miya came under the spell of his voice, took care of him and gave him tuition in Hindustani music for which he had an aptitude. Both of them gave performances in several places. He was also known as "Hindustan Ramachandran". After the demise of Vaidhi, he made bold to claim his place in Karnatic music as well and occupied the highest place among

the professionals for ten years. He retired from the field of Platform musicians and undertook tuitions from 1905 to 1910. His fame as a musician was eclipsed first by Pooch Iyengar and Koneri Rajpuram. After 1910, he was occupied in giving constructive criticism and incisive comments. He had a fund of sparkling humour which enlivened his conversation. He used to sing in a high sruti and maintain it with marvellous energy.

He lived an exemplary life of purity and left his unmistakable impress upon the music of his admirers, like Gayaksikhamani Muthayya. He was the only musician who could sing faultless, both Northern and Southern music. His special forte is Tyagaraj pieces, whose artistic excellence he would expound with rare insight. His favourite Ragas were Nayaqi, Varali, Mand, Hindol and Bihag. He was the only musician who could successfully manipulate Maha Vaidis's mode of singing.

RAMASWAMI SIVAM the elder brother of Maha Vaidhi, was a great Tamil scholar musician and composer. His Kambhoji varna bristles with swaraksaras. His Periya Puran Kirtans, and Tiruvilyadis Purana are substantial contributions to Karnatic music. His compositions bear the signature of Guhadasa. He was an excellent man in his own line, learned and pious. His elegy on his brother, is a monument of his grief, and powers, of literary expression in Tamil and his monograph. "Maha Vaidyanatha-Vijaya Sangraha-an elegy in prose was motivated by the sense of bereavement and loss, more than by a desire to perpetuate the achievements of his brother. At Ettayapuram, he composed a Ragamalika in Tamil. He was honoured with the titles "Sahitaya Puli, and Monai Singam in Ramnad, who sang with his brother in concert. He desired that no partition of family property should take place during his life time.

PERIYA TIRUKUNDRAM SUBRAMA IYER Was one of the masters of Sangeeta and Sahitya

who lived in the last century and was the elder brother of Ghauam Krishna Iyer of Trikundram, Tanjore District. He was the son of Ramaswamy Iyer of Ashta Sahasra group of Brahmins. He learnt music under Champakamannar of Ariylur a composer of songs. Later he practised music under Pachimiriam Adeppayya. After hearing some of the compositions of Subrahmanya, he extolled the composer as "Junior Srinivasan" who composed songs on Lord Ranganatha. He was appointed as the court musician of Raja Sarabhoja and composed a Kuravanji on God Brihadiswara. At the persuasion of his friend he also composed a Kuranvenji on Shivaji—the Ruler of Tanjore and a Pentad of songs (Panch Raga Malika). Afterwards he wrote many songs on various deities. He visited the house of Dewan Appuayyar and asked his musician Sankarabharanam Narasayya to compose a song in Sankarabharana. Narasayya composed a Pallavi and made his patron the hero of the piece.

TYAGARAJA SCHOOL OF MUSIC, PATNAM SUBRAMANAYA IYER DISCIPLE OF M. V. SUBBAYAR (1843-1902) "Of the musicians who appeared on the scene and preached the gospel of Absolute music in its purest form in the post Tyagaraja period, Pattam Subbramanni Iyer the 'Octopus' of Karnatic music was one. With all the defects, he had great devotion to Tyagaraj, the only virtue that perhaps saved him. He is the author of 'Sangeet Kaumidi'—(theory of Karnatic music written prior to his death. He was a 'Storm centre'—wherever he went, and a 'Venomous Voice' he was a 'Vesuvius'—a Niagara of Vituperation:" So asserts the late critic C. R. Srinivasan.

In the realm of music, Mr. Iyer was considered the equal of Mahavaidhi. His rendering of Tyagaraja kirtans were true to the original versions. His recitals were so faithful and polished that one thought that even Tyagaraja would have felt happy and gratified to hear them. He made a

thorough study of the saints compositions, and understood the true spirit of them. This enabled him to compose faithfully in the very style of the sage. But for the occurrence of the "Ankita" 'Venkatesa' in his compositions, one is likely to mistake them for those of Tyagaraja, as he was the disciple of Manambachavdi Venkata Subbayya. In the twin branches of musical science, Lakshana and Lakshya, he was equally proficient while comparing his merits with that of Mahavaidhi, the latter's music was celestial whereas his was absolute perfection reached by conscious effort. The voice of Patnam had a majesty about it. By strenuous practice he had made his voice mellow and pleasing and his concerts were uniformly successful. Just as Yogins engaged in the contemplation of the Infinite experience spiritual ecstasy, so also Patnam, derived musical ecstasy by spending all his time in the study and practice of music and composing. He was primarily responsible for the spread of musical knowledge, among people during his time. Amongst the patrons, who, by their munificence have contributed to the growth and development of Karnatic music, Pandi Dorai of Ramnad, occupies a chief place. Understanding aright, the greatness of Patnam, the Dorai frequented Tiruvayyar, to feast his ears with his music. It was he, who requested Patnam to take Pooch Iyenger as one of his disciples and thus ensured the continuance of the noble musical tradition. Once, in his own house at Tiruvayyar, and in the presence of Dorai, Patnam sang to the drum play of Tukaram. Pooch Iyenger provided the Tambura S'ruti from behind and also sang along. With his Guru Maha Vaidhi, who was also present then, expressed his high appreciation of the Alap and Pallavi in Kalyan Raga sung that day. Patnam also used to attend Maha Vaidhi's concerts and appreciate them.

Like Vaidhi, Patnam also was honoured by many Rajas. He specialised in certain Ragas, Talas tanas

and compositions. Frequently he sang the elaborate composition of Tyagaraya like 'Darini' in Suddha Saveri, and it was a treat to hear his soul-stirring recitals. The music that sprang from his rich resonant and deep voice, had a characteristic appeal.

With Sthayi Sruti, he dwelt in the region of Swaras of the higher octave with perfect ease. The fascinating phrases in fast tempo are very attractive.

After getting the approval of the renowned Vidwans, he would release a new composition and teach it to his disciples. While on a visit to Mysore, the court Pandits requested him to elaborate kannada gowla Raga, and sing a pallavi in it. Patnam rose equal to the occasion and gave a marvellous Alap and pallavi. Special presents were bestowed on him in recognition of his Manodharma Sangeeta. He composed a number of Tilanas. Hearing his recital of Tilana in Janjhuti Raga, the Maharaja presented him with gold todas. Tirukodikavil Krishna Iyer the violinist, used to play this tarana often in his solo recitals. He taught his compositions to many of his disciples through whom they have attained their well deserved publicity.

He was born in Tanjore District in a respectable family of Ashta Sahasra Brahmins. He showed signs of his musical genius at the age of six. His uncle Malathur Ganapati Sastri taught him music for some time and later on placed him under the tutelage of M. Subba Iyer, a direct disciple of Tyagaraj. He evinced a keen interest in music and exhibited a rare capacity in grasping the subtle and difficult branches of the art. Very soon he made an amazing progress and found an illustrious disciple. He was the co student of S. Dakshinamurthi Sastri of Masula.

It is said that his voice was hard, gruff and stiff. By an intense and steady practice he developed it to a wonderful degree of perfection.

He started his career when he was thirty and acquired fame as a musician of outstanding merit.

He performed the concerts with great care and ability and with remarkable devotion to the traditional method of exposition. Everywhere, audiences mustered strong to hear his polished and artistic rendering of music. Rajas honoured him in their Courts. Even the most uncompromising of his critics showered warm encomiums. He was assisted by his brother Panchanadam and brother in law Sessa Iyer on Violin.

He was an expert Pallavi-singer and in manipulating the most intricate time-measures, he was unequalled. He handled terse pallavis as well as common ones with great ease. He composed a Pallavi in Simhanandana Tala (128 Aksharakalas for an Avarta) which he did with little premeditation, performed it without the least effort and dazzled the audience. After this incident, he was titled as "Soora subrahmanya and in view of his remarkable originality in handling Begada, he was called also Begada" Subramanyam.

Having earned a name as a great platform musician, he directed his attention to musical compositions. He wrote about 100 compositions which include tanas, Varnas, Kirtans, javalis and tillanas which bear the stamp of "Venkateswara". These pieces exhibit the richness of his musical conception and mature knowledge. His tana varnas are quite original and constitute the grammar of music. The pre-eminence of Ragabhava, existence of design, and the absence of artificial structures and stereotypedness are the chief features of these Varnas. His composition "Raghuvamsa" in Kadankutuhala raga, an invention of his, has immortalised him. He was a Ganesh upasak and celebrated Ganesh festival with great eclat. His disciples are Pooch Iyengar, Tiger and K. Vasudevacharya of Mysore.

He shook off this mortal coil in 1902 leaving behind him his glorious contributions to the field and an everlasting name.

CONJEEVARAM SUBRAHMANYAM PILLAI :— alias (*Naina Pillai*) Of the prominent personalities that played a conspicuous part in the development of Karnatic music, the late Vidwan Naina Pillai occupies a unique place. A genius or master-mind in any walk of life is first a product of the times before he contributes something of his own and makes his influence felt on his age and surroundings. Pillai is one of that type who represents a particular phase of development in music. Being Dhanakoti's nephew, he was brought up in a family noted for its high musical traditions. He had his early training under *E. Ramachandra Bhagavata* who had taken the illustrious "Pushpavana" as his disciple and Pakripillai of Mannargudi helped him much in Tala Vistar. Having divulged all the uncanny secrets in the Tala he has delved into it more and more by intense study of the ramifying variety of Talas in the Tiruppugazh of Arunagirinathar of the sangeet Chandrika. Tala treatise of Manika Muraliyai. He learnt many Kirtans from Jalatarang "*Ramanayya chetti-descendant of Tyagaraya's*" disciple who was the custodian of many Tyagaraj Kirtans, *Veena Dhanam* also added many songs to his stocks. Naina Pillai made it his Mission to revive many old Kirtans from division and obscurity. Eminent players Dakshinamurti, and Govinda-Swami accompanied him in his concerts.

Naina Pillai was not a mere musician who repeats a number of songs learnt by rote from his Guru but a creative intellect of an original type who made distinct contribution to the music of to-day. He attempted with rare success, the very difficult task of singing Kirtan from the finger pose furnished by Swaras written in old Manuscripts without the helpful agency of a live medium to convey them and the wide popularity of these songs is proof of extraordinary ability in this novel field of musical study. He learnt Sabdharda, Raga-lakshana Tala-kala Pramana and according to that he investigated many Krities. Now obsolete. As a great devotee of the

immortal saint Tyagayya, he celebrated the anniversary in which all the big Vidwans participated. His practical swarajana had helped him in this gigantic task—the magnitude and the quality of which had even appalled the biggest masters. He had appreciable volume and audibility with full vigour but it is doubtful whether it had any melody or resonance. He had no display of form, curves or exquisite graces with a temperamental want of softness and elegance, his voice and training with obsession in Tala have on the whole, contributed to make his master mind, delight in building wonderful steel structure of spectacular sky-scrapers rather than enchanting Villas and breezy mansions in the midst of broad open grounds of undulating green, decorated with waving and colourful foliage and flowers of ornamental plants. He was an expert in Madham and Drita Kala Kirtans with good variety of Swaraprastara. He developed the whole structure of the song, its Raga and Swara-krama with a crispness. Vigour and finish, his Kirtans have a bracing touch of his own. He is more a Swara-giant than a delicate artist who can sway the heart to emotion with lively shades, imagery what he lacks in Raga Bhava, he makes up in Swara prastar, which has a racy spiciness about it. The music world identifies him with his Pallavi which is his forte.

The unshaky and sure fixture of his time measure, his power and deftness of execution, his scintillating piles of Swara groupings and rhythmic variations of intricacy and 'Neravals', his artful manipulation of the graded Mukthayi (refrain after Sanchara) with the Sahitya or Jivansruti of the Raga in Avarthas (twins) finishing with sweeping neraval and final fixture or Mohara are highly noteworthy.

He successfully explored the immense possibilities of Tala Gatis and Kalas. Every concert of his, which attracted huge crowds, was a proof of his extraordinary skill, in Tala. Indeed his mastery of the system, was so thorough, his knowledge of its details

so perfect, and his perception of Kalapramana, so very fine that he was the despair of even the noted champions, among Tala experts, whether it be on the drum, Kanjir or Konagol. In fact, his elaborate Swara combination represents so many different forms, as Talarupa, set in the language of the Swaras. It was really a pleasure to watch the virile Vidwan in uncontested command of the platform improvising innumerable labrynth of intricate Swaras, especially in rare types of melody, in puzzling time-measures over which he had perfect control, so much so that he developed distinct style of his own which was very much admired by music-lovers. When he sat on the dais, he was like a warrior and used to display his profound knowledge of Swara Sthana and control on different Jatis of Talas.

Laya was his forte and he dominated the field to such an extent, that he aptly be called "Laya Brahma" of the South. Mr. Pillai wisely concentrated on an intensive cultivation and mastery of Tala and showed to the world by the marvellous results he had achieved, the immense field that lay yet unexplored in our music. Within the short span of the life, he could only devote his time and energy to ransacking the hidden ramifications of Tala.

His name occupies a very conspicuous place as one whose mastery of Tala, was unique and unparalleled and who brought to light several Kirtans of Tyagayya which were long forgotten from the dead arses of a departed past through the aid of lifeless letters in musty manuscripts which by itself would constitute a unique achievement indeed.

He built upon the solid foundations of musical tradition, which is not only the pride and glory of Karnatic but which gives to its music a peculiar individuality and charm. After the names who glorified the art in the past he is the only man who devoted considerable attention and study to the subject of music. His disciple Chittoor Subra-

manayam, is one in whom we find the signs of his master.

VEDANTA BHAGAVATAR of *Kalladukurichi* 1880 A.D.—is one of the three votaries of distinction. Ariyakudi and Koneri Rajpuram noted for slow movements, highly subtle conception and imagery. He noted for grandeur and majesty like a spectacular cascade or waterfall whereas Koneri is a slow moving flood of zigzag and ramifying courses in sylvan wilds.

If ever a genius contributed a distinct style, in music and had a career of rare brilliance and if the very talents and easy success brought into him, a selfcentred egotism that disdained the whole world and virtually shut him up in a strong citadel of parochial tastes and drew towards him mixed feelings of respect, admiration, fear and prejudice, it is this man Vedant Bhagavatar. He possessed a powerful voice and was a friend of late Violin master Krishna Iyer with his powerful Swarajana, and grip over Tala, he was a formidable opponent to many of the musicians of his class. He was noted for his Tara Sthai where he stayed for an appreciable time and displayed wonderful pyro-technique. The chief character was his Meend' or Glissando or Vankai but not ragai. Broad plans with profundity and depth of conception he impressively handled Ragas and pieces in vilumbit kala without the hurry of modern average music, sweeping and majestic curves revelling in strategic Swarasthan, exploitation of the fullest possibilities of the sounds in the relevant Swaras and Anuswaras, a characteristic manipulation of an avalanche of symmetrical, well arranged musical phrases in Madhyamakala. With full Raga Bhava, in all that is sung and bold and extempore but not acrobatics of an unconventional riotous fancy. He had magnificent conception and bold imagery. His art of singing grips an audience from the outset and excites them to a high pitch of emotion. His masterpieces are Mukhari, Karaharapriya, and Kidargowala. In the matter of Swara and Tala Jnana, he was an acknowledged master.

His fertile imagination displayed itself in his Swara-prastar and Pallavi as well without losing sight of Ragbhava. He said that no Kirtan is exhaustive of its Ragabhava, so long as Sangathis are not inconsistent with the Bhava of the piece according to the Manodharma of the musician. His mastery over Swara jnana has instilled into him a fondness for the rare and difficult art of srutibheda which was also cultivated by the late Govindaswami and Ponnuswami Pillai. He brought out many interesting and popular national songs. He attempted to bring out some original works of practical value (1) Raga Sudhkar (2) Pallavi Parijata and Swara kalpalata dealing with Raga Pallavi and Swaraprastar. He was a great Laxon vidwan.

CHAPTER VII

Pooch Iyengar

(Alias Ramnad Srinivasa Iyengar)

A man of average height, well-built and of fair-complexion, Ramnad Srinivasa Iyengar alias 'POOCH' always wore a cheerful face. Of the classes of musicians enumerated in Sangit Ratnakar, viz. Sikshakara, Bhavuka, Ranjaka and Anukara, Pooch comes under the class of Ranjakas of the first degree. He was the son of Narayan Iyengar and Lakshmi Ammal a sweet voiced lady. On account of his Smartness, Sreenivasan was called by his father 'POOCH' which became his Trade-Mark, in the public. He passed Matric in the local High School at Ramnad. Observing the keen sense of Perception, precocity, and aptitude for music which Pooch inherited from his mother, Raja Bhaskar Setupati recommended him to Patnam Subrahmanyam Iyer for musical instruction. His class-mates were Mysore Vasudevachar, and Tiger Varadachar. He eminently succeeded his Garu as the chief disciple. Famous artists such as Thirukodikavil, Narayan Appa (Mridangist) Govindaswamy (fiddler) and Melattur (Achyutaryapuram) Krishna Iyer, accompanied him in his concerts. He was honoured by the Rajas of Travancore and Mysore. The Raja of Ramnad honoured him with a public Procession.

He lived in the Golden age of famous artists like Konerirajapuram, Veena Seshanna and Ramanayya Das, Tirukodikavil, Pushpavanam, Anantarama Bhagavata, and B. Kittappa. He led a simple life, and spent his time in the company of learned musicians. He trained several artists like Ariyakudi, Simizhi Sundaram Iyer, Karaikudi Srinivasan, P. Ramasubbaya, Bangalore Nagaratnam, Salem Doraswamy Shiyali Papa, Nellore Krishna veni, and Raja Muthu

Ramalinga Setupati; "The first Jalatarangam" Expert Subbayya Vidwan, was his student. He earned good name by his charitable temperament, and passed away in his fifty-first year, Shedding a permanent ray of effulgence in the field of music. He gave his last concert at Mannargudi.

The Plan of his concert is as under :— Varna, Raga Alap, Kriti with two Avrittas of Swaras, Javali, Pada, Tillana, Sloka and Mangalam, all combined for a duration of 5 hours. While he was young, he sang in 4½ Sruti, which he later diminished to 3 Sruti. He possessed good volume in voice and noted for its sonority, and mellowness, clear intonation and pronunciation, expression of Rasa, and Bhava, with a perfect knowledge of the Sahitya of the pieces, are his characteristics. He himself enjoyed his music and made others also enjoy his music. Whatever he took up, Kirtana, Javali, Pada Swara-prastar, Ragaswarupa was there in real form. Without deviating from the principles of tradition he blended Sahitya with musical variety of notes (Sangati), a special feature of his art. His tempo was neither fast nor slow, but middling with perfect balance of rhythm or time—measure. He was the originator of Madhyam kata kritis—singing. His music always produced impressive musical effects for which he was venerated by his fellow-artists. He had a Hindustani musician, Bhatt as his disciple. He grasped Bhatt's melodies (North) and introduced them in his compositions. His favourite Ragas, are Kaphi, Kalyani, Varali, Begada Sahana, Huseni, and amongst the collection of his kritis, his popular pieces are:—Nilotpala Nayake, Nee Madi Challaqa, Garuda Gamana, Ni Padamule, and Subrahmanyaya Namaste; He used to take a pallavi either in Bhiravi, or Sankarabharana, make an elaborate development of Raga, and tana with intricate tala gatis and prolong it to 2 hours. He finished his concert with a javali in Kaphi "Vaddani" and an English Band tune as was in vogue in those days.

As a composer:—"Saraguna Palimpa", "Parama Pavana", "Sri Raghukula", "Anudina", "Karuneto", (Meghranjani) "Raghunatha", in (Swar Ranjani, janya of Sankarabharana "Nijamuga" in kirvani, Paritapa, in Kanada, "Ninu golachi", in karahara priya, are his noted creations. He composed a tillana in Lakshmi Tala of 25 matras, in Kaphi, yadukula kambodi, paraj, Sankarabharana, purnachandrika; Javalis "Marulukonnadi", in kamas, "sarasamu", in kaphi, varnas in Mohana, kanada, vasanta, varali, and a Ragamalika Swarajati "Swami mel miyya lagi nenade" commencing in Raga chakravaka, were all highly interesting. He was a great devotee and his heart's outpourings appeared in the form of kritis and javalis. Once his foot slipped while returning from the bazaar, due to the rind of a plantain fruit, and he had a fracture. The hospital treatment in no way improved the hit, therefore he composed song in praise of Lord Venkatesa, "Saraguna" in Kidara Gowla and tillana in honour of Nivarkoil Deva. He recovered soon from the injury. He also composed songs in the name of Sri Padmavati Ammal Parthasaradhi, Tripligane, and Kodanda Rama all of which enhanced his reputation and immortalised him. Thus he established a name for himself in the niche of the Temple of Music.

TIGER VARADACHARI

of Kolatur. Sri Peranbadur Taluq. (1878-1951)

If our national music should be preserved, the Unique styles of the great masters should be adapted to, for, they combine the intellectual and emotional elements in the highest measure."

Tiger Varadachari, is the only representative of the old masters of musical tradition of the schools of coimbatore Raghav Iyer, Pallavi Sesha Iyer and Patnam Subramanayam Iyer. He is a voracious scholar, versatile genius, and a great exponent of Karnatic music in whom we find gems of rare brilliance not,

always easy to choose and grasp. This is perfectly due to the originality of his genius.

In his kirtan, Swara prastar, Pallavi, Padam, Javali and folk songs, he displays an inevitable method of his own. He builds his Alap on a creative edifice, evolving unexpected combinations by an artistic alteration of phraseology, of the long and the short. His 'birkas' are fresh. Continual new order of notes flash and vanish leaving one stunned by their charm. A new series starts from a remote note, yet with a natural link between the end of the last and the beginning of the next. His way is not to evolve gradually from a single note or to conclude in the same. Mechanical parallelism is his aversion. He fills his 'birkas' with consecutive notes as well as by sudden jumps. His slides over a whole gamut, are exquisite. Commonplace combinations are by an artistic vision clothed in fresh beauty and novelty. The charm of the start and the finish are altogether his own. Theories affect him not but his style generates new theories. His notes are fine crystals and his gamaks, live sparks, no raga can resist his blandishments but submits to his manner, ever new and ever elusive. The structure of an adept's song is variegated by blends-compounds of two or more near and distant notes. He brims over with them. Their identity is unsuspected by the unanalytical ears. They look innocent and simple. When one tries to reproduce them on the Veena or the Violin, their synthetic make-up is disclosed. The weird yet dignified effects are due to the lurking presence of a large number of these blends, which are his current coins. His pallavi is marked by clearness and precision. Even for experts, to follow his tune is a hard task. He has perfect command over Vilambit and Druta Kalas. His accuracy is unfailing; muktayis and makutas are definite and fore-warning. Subtle variations accompany the commencement, the middle and the end of each avara. Lovely swaras appear in sparkling groups and the resonant individuality of

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the raga is never missed. His laya is a continual feast and a problem raised by the varying orders of the notes which intersperse the duration. Jatis are under his thumb. His pallavi is thus a concentration of his intellectual skill no less than his artistic taste.

He is one of those responsible for the closer assimilation of the instrumental music with the living voice. He fires the instrumental players with the same order with which he glows. Veena Seshana expressed that he was not a "Tiger" but a 'Lion' among musicians. Even professional jealousies give way before the force of genius. Even if he handles a common raga or a familiar song, he creates a new earth, new heaven dipped in all the colours of the rainbow, whatever he touches, he adorns. The trite and the ordinary becomes classical in his hands. He enlivens and enriches the dull and hackneyed song, he creates at every step. His ideas flow and each is a new birth endowed with life, sweetness and strength. He does not lack in inspiration or invention. His voice is sometimes refractory, but when he has curbed its whims, no slave is more obedient to his lightest bidding. He is deeply versed in the art of abhinaya sent in immanent danger of dying out. Even in Devaranama, his power of expression bathes the spectator's mind in the pure light of heaven. His snatches are a treat. He acted as the principal of Music Academy, Kalakshetra-music section and also the President of the music conference.

Dr. SREENIVASA RAGHAVAN

(1873-1949)

Is the nephew of Tillasthanam Rama Iyengar, a chief disciple of Tyagaraja. Music was in his blood as it appears that his mother used to sing well. An instinctive appreciation of Classical music exercised a fascination over him in his early life. He grew up in the musical tradition built by the masters of the last generation. Patnam, Maha Vaidhi, Sarabha sastr, Tirukodikavil, Poochayyengar and others. He

knew some of them intimately too. He had his training in music under Panju Bhagavatar and Narsimha Bhagavatar and T. Ramaswamy of Tiruvattur. One gentleman presented him with the portrait of Tyagayya. Since then he started celebrating Tyagaraja's day of birth on Pushya-bahula-panchami every month which continued till his death. His wife also joined him in the festival. Besides mastering the music of a piece in the traditional form, he delved deep and found great philosophic truths embedded in them. One could spend hours listening to his exposition of a Kriti with commentary and how music had been intertwined in it with the Bhava. He rendered all the pancharatna Kritis in a unique style.

Every song that he rendered was a work of art with a balance, symmetry and beauty which would fill the heart of the singer and listener alike. He had set a very high standard. His repertory of Kritis is very extensive. He found in Tyagayya a fountain-all undefiled and pure to slake his thirst of ages. He believed in Tyagayya as his Parama Acharya. He lit the lamp of Tyagabrahma Bhakti in many a heart. Next he had a fascination in Kshetrajna and collected Tillasthana Padas from Narasimha Bhagavatar and Panju Iyer, disciples of his uncle. He compared them often with the notes of the school of Walajapet. He revelled in singing Apurva Ragas Kritis with an ease that was admirable and enviable. He was as much at home with his ragas Ganamurti, Gangeya, Bhushani, Manavati Nabho-mani, etc as the average musician was with Todi, Bhiravi etc. His grasp of the Sruti subtleties was so correct that he could render faultless any of the quarter tones figuring in Apurvaragas. Those who doubted whether notes like Suddha gandhar, Suddha dhaivat Suddha nishad really existed or were more artificial names given to the 12 standard notes of the octave had simply to listen to him to believe that the 22 Srutis were capable of

being produced by the human voice. It was a treat to hear his Pancharatna Kritis. His inimitable rendering are in Hamir, and Ahiri. He was not only a repository of Tyagayya Kritis but a veritable storehouse of Tyagaraja lore and anecdotes. His researches into the references to music in Silapadikaram and the Kudimiyamalai inscriptions moved his penetrating mind. He acted as the secretary of Sri Krishna Ganasabha, and was a member of the Expert Committee of the Madras Music Academy. He was the connecting link to Sri Tyagayya Parampara at the age of 72. His criticisms of contemporary music under the pen name of 'GANARCHAKA' were too pungent for our modern musicians.

As per his desire to die on Pushya Bahula Panchami—the day of Tyagayya's Nirvana, he passed away on June 14th 1949 Bahula Panchami while singing. The mid-day Puja had been over and he chose to give Arti at the entrance of Panchami and the evening Bhajan was started at 6 P.M. with the Guru Stotra 'GURULEKA' and 'NEE CHITTAM' in Dhanyasi and next 'Thera tiyaga rada' and he felt weak, but managed to join 'Vidajalanura' in Janaranjani, and 'Chede buddhi manara' in Adana—one of his favourites but it left him retired. He sat quietly listening to 'Evare Ramayya' in Gangeyabhushani sung by others. Tears flowed from his eyes. The Divine call was obviously coming, for one noticed symptoms of pain. He soon rushed and sat on his bed and shouted 'RAMA', thence before losing his eyes in eternal sleep. Tataji as he used to address Tyagayya had accepted him, and he died in 1949.

KONERIRAJA PURAM VAIDYANATHA

(1880-1921)

"The term 'Vaidhi' or Vaidyanathan has a special significance in the field of musical biographies, for all the great Vaidyanathans viz. Maha Vaidhi, Konerirajapuram, Chembai, were all musicians of

the first rank. The hero of this sketch was born in 1880 at Manathrai, in Tanjore Dt. His father Narayanaswamy Iyer was a land-lord.

After Vaidi's mother's death, he was brought up by his maternal uncle at Konerirajapuram. Hence the prefix Konerirajapuram was attached to his name. He learnt adhyayana, Sama and Yajurvedas after his Upanayanam was celebrated in his seventh year. He heard the famous musicians of his time and developed a taste for music. His musical tuition was arranged with Nagaswar Vidwan Kolandavelu Pillai. His class-mates were Vaidyalingam Pillai, and Nallur Viswanandha Iyer. He started his career as a back-ground singer to "Harikatha Kesari" Panchapakesa Bhagavatar of Tirupayanam and later he became a platform musician. He married the daughter of his uncle after the latter's demise. He sang for Maradanandur Swamikal and got a remuneration of one rupee.

He attended the concert of Sarabha Sastri, in the combination of Manpudia Pillai. Manpudia Pillai had some fascination for Vaidhi after hearing his sweet voice and wished to make him his disciple. He called on Vaidhi one day and expressed his desire thus:—"I shall make you a front-rank musician, provided you are willing to learn music from me." Vaidhi readily agreed to the proposal and immediately followed him, without the knowledge of his guardians. He remained with Manpudia for two years and mastered all the intricacies of music and became a finished product. His father all the while was investigating about his whereabouts, till at last he got the address from a marriage invitation card and he started in quest of him. Vaidhi accosted Pillai in his peregrinations to Tinnevely and Pudukkotta. Afterwards, he accompanied his father to his native place. Pooch Iyengar heard him at a marriage function and blessed him. He recommended him to the public and ever after Vaidhi got several invitations. He earned name and money. He made

his first debut in the Tondamandalam Krishna Ganasabha, Madras, with Tirukodikavil's violin, Palani Krishnayya's Ghatam, Mamundia Pillai's Kanjira, and Dakshinamurti's Mridangam. In the course of his concert, he sang a new Pallavi in Atti-chowkakala, which was unintelligible to ordinary Vidwans. Even the great Tirukodikavil Krishnan, was puzzled and failed to understand and to follow him. Krishnan grew wild and remarked "you always sing your Pallavis at a distance of two furlongs, now you extended the distance to two miles which is quite absurd. What is the fun of doing like this? Do you find any pleasure?" so saying, he put down his violin automatically and kept quiet. Although Vaidhi was a great Tala expert, he immensely liked Tirukodikavil at heart and booked him for all his performances. Afterwards Vaidhi changed his crooked method of singing in Vilambit Kala to a plain and popular method. He managed the minor artists also with great love and tact. Once he quelled the egoism of a certain violinist by singing the Kriti 'Nivada Ne gana' in Saranga in Chowka and Druta Kala. He heard great Hindustani Ustads like Hafij Khan, Rahmat Khan and Bashir Khan of Gwalior. After hearing Ustad Rahmat's ('BHULOKA Gandharva) music he was ashamed of his own style and changed his method to Bhavapradhan Sangit, blended with the sweet cadences of Tirukodikavil and developed a new style.

Personality. A man of dark brown complexion, and of 5-4-height, he suspended a gold chain with Rudrakshas round his neck, wore diamond earrings and a gold wristlet. He was a plain-living and high-thinking orthodox brahmin, God-fearing and well-versed in classical Tamil. He spoke very polished language. He washed his clothes even.

Disciples. Coimbatore Viswanatha Iyer, Budaluru Krishnamurti Sastri, Gottu Krishna Iyengar, Mudli-

konda Venktram Iyer, Papanasam Sivan, and Maharajapuram.

He used to teach his pupils on the open pial during nights from 11 p. m. to 2 A. M. in a low voice. He used to call Maharajapuram an Ekalavya. Papanasam Sivan heard many of his concerts. Vaidhi has admirers all over India from the Cape to Madras.

Style. His is the ideal voice ranging from 4½ to 5 Srutis. He always used to hum from Mandra Shadja (Kharaj) to Madhya Shadja. He was a Nadopasaka. His musical features are : Sarwa kala pramana, Sarwa krita Gambhirya, Gamaka Suddha, Sruti Suddha, Tana, intensity, sweetness, good conception of different Ragas. He could easily engage his auditors from 4 to 5 hours without any monotony. His forte is extended to Pallavi Sruti, Swara, and Raga Jnana, Neraval, and Ragamalika. He was an all-round expert. His style can be compared to that of Coimbatore Raghava Iyer whom he took as a model. His voice is audible even to a thousand people without a mike.

He had mastered all the aspects of musical compositions, Raga Vistar, creative faculty, Raga Kalpana, Madhyama Kala beauty, Emotional pallavi Prastarana, and above all, Manodharma, endowed with great originality. Namakal Narasimbha Iyengar the then veteran musician, highly complimented him.

Once he gave a concert at Tanjore with the combination of Pakkiri and Govindaswami of violin fame.

Vaidhi took up the piece, "Janani ninuvina," and put amazing neraval and Swarkalpana. Govindaswami was so impressed that he requested the former to allow him to enjoy the music. There was great cooperation and affinity between Govinadasamy and Vaidhi. Vaidhi used to give concerts frequently at Madras.

He asked Pushpavanam one day to sing before him. But Pushpavanam evaded for fear of approaching such great artists. Vaidhi once arranged pushpavanam's concert in a place where he wielded good influence, and Pushpavanam was forced to yield. From thence, they became fast friends and Vaidi gave a concert on the occasion of Pushpavanam's marriage. Indeed Vaidhi encouraged good artists.

On one occasion pakkiri and Vaidhi met at Alwar Tirunagari and gave a joint concert. Each one displayed his individual skill. That day Vaidi sang Shanmukhapriya superbly. Pakkiri was so much moved that he shed tears of joy, and prostrated before Vaidi and presented him with a gold snuff-box weighing 10 Sovereigns. Vaidi was congenial with his clients and took only fixed remuneration. Just before Vaidi's death, he repeated the following words on his death-bed. Up to now I sang only for the sake of Sadhaka and if God perchance destines me to live, I shall sing for the elevation of my Soul." (Atmardha). He passed away in 1921.

K.V. SRINIVAS IYENGAR

K. V. Srinivas Iyengar is the brother of Sangeetha KalaNidhi "Tiger Varadhachar", Ex-principal of Indian Music Kalakshetra, Adyar. He was a profound Sanskrit, Telugu and Tamil scholar, and well-versed in English. He combined in himself most of the desirable elements of an ideal musician; song, instrument and dance are the essentials, of Sangeet and he occupied an eminent place in all the three departments. He was gifted with rare powers of composing music. He possessed a very fine bass voice and was a pleasant singer. A past master in the art of dance, he was the author of several standard musical works that found the asset of countless pupils. He published Sangeeta Ratnavalai, Sangeeta pradayini; Sangeeta Sudhambudhi, Gana Bhaskaram, Sangeeta Chitrambari and Rasarnava and Tyagaraja Hridaya with notes in three parts,

Pooch Iyengar**85****KOTISWARA IYER****(1868)—21—10—1936**

Kotiswara Iyer, grandson of Kavikunjara Bharati took his B.A. degree after undergoing college course at Pudukkottah and Tiruchirappalli. He was associated for a long time with Pooch Iyengar. He visited Mysore and got the praise of all music lovers. He published SKAND PURANA KEERTANS in Tamil. He wrote an original composition in 72 melas and Janya Ragas in Tamil and composed Varnas in Saveri, Kidargowla, Dhanyasi and Bilhari.

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